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EDITORIAL NOTES

DURING the past month the "Old Vic." has once more been in danger. A strenuous campaign last year resulted in the raising of a sum of money adequate to buy a new site for Morley College, which had to be moved from the Waterloo site if the requirements of the L.C.C. were to be met. Towards this sum, Mr. (now Sir) George Dance handsomely contributed £30,000. It appeared as though the Old Vic. were safe at last; reconstructed, it would sail in a fair wind in calm waters. Just as the Old Vic. Governors were breathing easily at last the blow fell. The Underground Railway wished to run a tunnel under the new site (in Westminster Bridge Road), which had been bought for Morley College, and proposed to dig a shaft on the site in order to facilitate the excavation of earth from the tunnel. Negotiations with the company broke down. The needs of industry were paramount; nothing could be discussed unless the Old Vic. would first of all concede the Company's case. Then came a letter in the *Times*, signed by Mr. Asquith, the Archbishop of York and numerous other dignitaries, a letter which emphasised the danger to "the nearest thing we have to a national theatre." Almost the whole Press joined in; a considerable section of the public was obviously agitated; and very rapidly a settlement was arrived at. The important element in it is that the Company has now decided to dig its shaft elsewhere, for there is a large area in which to do it. Morley College will move; the Old Vic. will put its house in order; and all—though a few thousands more would be welcome—will be well with the most commendable of all contemporary theatrical enterprises.

WE may be wrong. But if we are right in supposing that the *Times* letter and the subsequent agitation had something to do with the rapid and satisfactory settlement of the problem, the moral is obvious. A great many questions, in our day, go by default ; especially as concerns the destruction of beautiful or historical buildings, of which Kensington Square (now in danger from Messrs. Barker) is a signal example. Private argument may be a great deal of use when one is dealing with responsible individuals. But when one is dealing with solicitors, or secretaries of companies, or agents for landlords, one is dealing with people who cannot allow their private feelings to influence them, who are, in fact, much more inclined to play Juggernaut-Shylock than any private person ever is. When public interests are at stake it is always advisable to go straight for the public ; to inform them through the Press, and to make the pressure of public and Press felt by these corporations and vague authorities who so often do harm almost automatically. A row will always wake somebody up, if for no other reason than that it is desired to avoid subsequent trouble. We have had a remarkable example of what can be done when a vigorous newspaper campaign is waged ; and we trust that the example will be copied.



WE do not know whether anybody proposes to report *verbatim* the debates—or rather “lectures and counter-lectures”—which have been held this summer at the London School of Economics in aid of the Hospitals’ Fund. If so we look forward to the report of the discussion of Miss Rebecca West and Miss Sheila Kaye-Smith on—or nominally on—the sex novel. Neither disputant (and we commend them for it) talked very extensively on the alleged subject of the afternoon ; but both talked sense. We were particularly interested in the confessedly irrelevant remarks by Miss West on the subject of recent developments in English prose. It is possible, of course, to exaggerate the influence and importance of the experiments that have been made ; the great majority even of cultivated readers are unacquainted with them, and most writers are content to go on doing what their predecessors have done. Yet there does seem some risk that intelligent young writers may be tempted, if the examples before them are not discussed, to waste their energies in unfruitful directions. Miss West described the two principal tendencies of recent innovators, as being (1) a tendency to destroy the sentence ;

and (2) a tendency too much to subdivide our sense impressions, both being attacks on form. For the sentence, which was a brick, we are being offered a heap of brick-dust ; we are invited, in fact, to descend again the difficult slope of organised speech which humanity has climbed, and to return to the crude, if forcible, ejaculations of our animal ancestors who had tails but no verbs. The attempts to record, as of equal value, every small sensation and fleeting thought have their interest ; but they grow monotonous after the shock of novelty has gone and they also involve a great sacrifice, for the whole appeal of literature, as the whole interest of life, has hitherto depended on the view—based on the actual human heart—that some things are more important than others, and all evolution has been accompanied by persistent attempts to synthesise, rather than to break up our impressions. A further study of the implications of these recent movements would be welcome.



WITH the death of Professor Ker, following on the death of Sir Walter Raleigh, and the retirement of Professor Saintsbury, the English Professorial ranks are sadly depleted. Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch remains at Cambridge, but beyond him there are very few men teaching in the English schools who are conspicuously in contact with the wider literary world, who wield an extra-academic influence, or who have even written memorable books. Younger men are doubtless in some of the chairs, who may occupy, ten years hence, positions analogous to those occupied by the men we have mentioned. But the majority of the Professors seem to have renounced the ambition of making important additions to critical literature ; the editing of a text or two, the production of a few manuals for students, seems to satisfy many of them. We are not underrating, we hope, the importance of fine scholarship or the supreme importance, for a Professor, of his teaching work ; but we cannot help feeling that the most inspiring teachers of English have, as a whole, been just those men who have been something more than pure scholars and something more than lecturers.



IN a month or two we shall be circularising our Original Subscribers asking them to renew their subscriptions. Once again we may take the liberty of reminding them that they will save us trouble, and give themselves none, if they will send their renewals in early and unsolicited.

Many of them, in the past, have been as dilatory in act, as they have been obviously benevolent in sentiment. We may also earnestly ask them, indeed, all our subscribers, to do what they can in the way of inducing suitable friends to subscribe. We have not the spare cash to indulge in enormous advertisement schemes and have to rely largely upon the efforts of our friends to introduce the LONDON MERCURY to new readers. We hope shortly to send all our Original Subscribers, whom we regard as collaborators in the enterprise, a letter by way of reporting progress. We have always refused, in the interests of economy, to make the slightest sacrifice of quality as regards our paper, printing, or general editorial scheme. This has meant a hard fight to keep our end up, and although the paper is going better than ever before we can still do with an increased circulation. We may be forgiven for these mundane details. It is no good producing any article, however disinterestedly and enthusiastically, without taking some steps to sell it. We should welcome, we may add, any suggestions that readers have to make as to ways and means of dispersing the paper more widely.

LITERARY INTELLIGENCE

THE London Library, on occasion of the centenary of the birth of Coventry Patmore, has organised, and will keep open through the greater part of this month, a loan exhibition of first editions and MSS. of the poet's works, borrowed from the library of Mr. Edmund Gosse, who was Patmore's intimate friend during the last twenty years of his life. The collection is practically complete. It includes the very rare *Poems* of 1844; the *Odes* privately printed in 1868 and destroyed by the author after a very few copies had been distributed; the original *Unknown Eros* of 1881; and two topographical prose pamphlets of 1886 and 1887, the latter of which is anonymous, and would not be known save by the evidence of the poet's handwriting on the title-page of this copy. There is also the *Amelia* of 1888, privately printed in twenty copies, with an illuminated title, executed for Mr. Gosse by Miss Bertha Patmore. But the most interesting item in the collection is the volume containing first editions of *The Angel in the House*, 1854, and of *The Espousals*, 1856, arranged by Patmore for a projected re-issue of the whole work. This has corrections and additions, in the poet's handwriting, on almost every page, and was given to Mr. Gosse in 1884 to be carefully preserved.



WE must apologise to Mr. Grant Richards for a misprint in our last number. We said he was offering a prize of £1,000 for a first novel; the prize was actually £100. Happily, the error was on the right side. Had we said the prize was £10, Mr. Richards would have been entitled to howl very loudly. MSS. must be submitted before September 22nd, 1923.



THE Birmingham Repertory Theatre announces for the autumn the first production of Mr. Bernard Shaw's *Back to Methuselah*. Prices, etc., to be obtained from the theatre. The play is a cycle consisting of five parts, each complete in itself, which will be presented on consecutive days. It is therefore well named.



WE deeply regret to announce the death of W. P. Ker, Emeritus Professor of English in the University of London and Fellow of All Souls. Professor Ker was 67; he died of heart failure while climbing in Italy; he did not begin climbing until advanced middle age, and the enterprise and the end are characteristic of the man. He was one of those pertinacious Glasgow men at Balliol: he was small, almost shrivelled, with a round red face, piercing eyes and thin tight lips. He knew more about mediæval literature than any man alive, and he was an expert on wines. He could be silent as the grave, and he could, in congenial company and at a suitable hour, converse with great brilliance, richly and very tersely. We hope later to print a fuller memorial of him.



LOUIS COUPERUS, the Dutch novelist, is dead at the age of 60. Several of his novels were translated into English, the earliest having been included in the late Mr. Heinemann's admirable *International Library* which was edited by

Mr. Gosse. The last, we think, to appear in English was *Old People and Things That Pass*, a book so beautifully written that its pessimism seemed charming. The translation was done by the late Teixeira de Mattos.

IN our last number we printed a letter from Messrs. Trehearne & Norman about Africa House. A correction is necessary. The Doric columns and press are not calculated to support the mass above "exactly"; they are calculated to support a load of four times that which they are called on to bear.

A NEW firm of publishers, Halton & Truscott Smith, has opened business in the Haymarket. It will make its *début* in the autumn with an extensively illustrated quarto on *The Etchings of Sir F. Seymour Haden, P.R.E.*, to which Mr. Malcolm Salaman is contributing a biographical and critical introduction, and another on *Old French Colour Prints* of the eighteenth century. For the latter volume Mr. Campbell Dodgson of the British Museum is writing an authoritative essay, and most of the material for illustration, of which a considerable proportion will be in colour, comes from important private collections, where alone many of the rarest and finest impressions are to be found. Messrs. Halton & Truscott Smith also announce a new annual for collectors of modern etchings and engravings, which Mr. Salaman is editing. It is to be called *Fine Prints of the Year*, and illustration will be a conspicuous feature of the volume, which will form a survey of the principal work done by etchers, engravers and lithographers in Europe and America during the year. The three members of this firm were for many years on the staff of *The Studio* and they propose to concentrate chiefly on the production of high-class illustrated books.

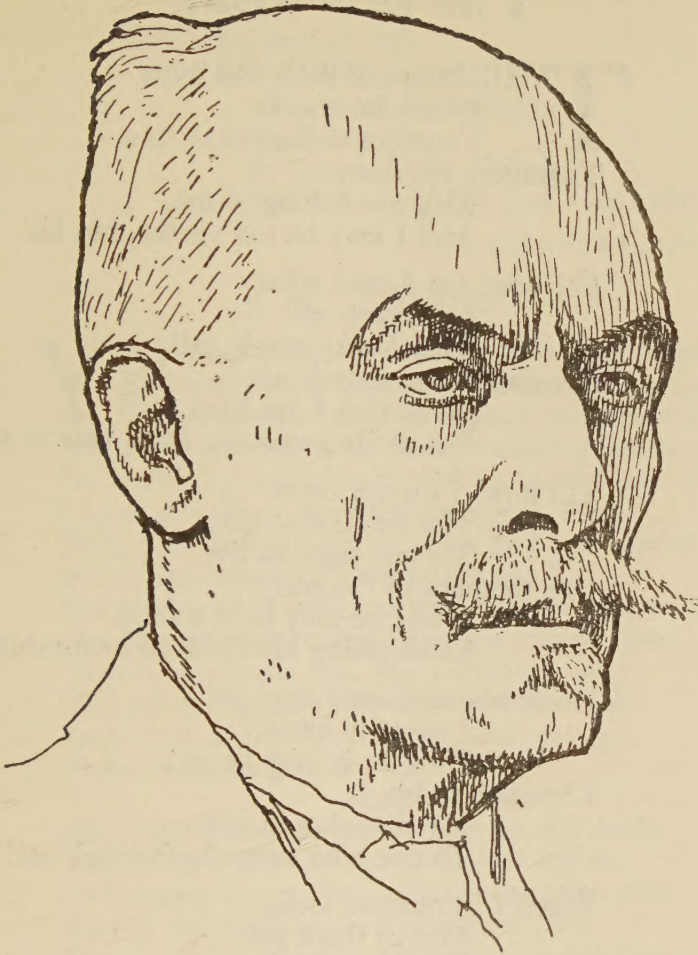
NEW AND RECENT PERIODICALS

WE have received No. 1 of *Le Arti Decorative*, published at Via del Senato 8A, Milan. The paper covers much the same ground as our *Connoisseur*, though it is much smaller. There are some beautiful coloured illustrations; there is also an advertisement of a gramophone with a dog and the inscription "La Voce del Padrone."

EUROPE, a monthly international review, is published at 7 Place Saint Sulpice, Paris. The May number contains, amongst others, contributions by G. Duhamel, Elie Faure, Pierre Hamp, Luc Durtain and Romain Rolland. The last named writes about Mr. Gandhi, a congenial spirit.

THE PILLAR-BOX, published at 43 Cromwell Road, is a fiction magazine containing stories contributed by members of the Union of Post Office Workers. It is a well-illustrated magazine, fully up to the ordinary monthly level. We notice especially a series of reminiscent landscape poems by Francis Andrews.

HUTCHINSON'S *Splendour of the Heavens*, in twenty-four 1s. 3d. parts, is an "Outline" of Astronomy, and, so far as we are able to judge, a very good one.



XXVIII—MAURICE HEWLETT

by Powys Evans

POETRY

Two in a Body

THIS house of flesh and bone
 Which he and I
 Together occupy—
 Together, yet alone—
 May not belong to me,
 And I may be the visitor, not he.

For what am I, and what
 Is there at all
 That I may surely call
 My own? And may it not
 So be that I am here
 But as his pensioner from year to year?

Till now, I cannot trace
 The deeds that give
 Me any right to live
 One moment in the place;
 While he may hold a scrip
 Establishing his claim to ownership.

He seems my friend, and yet
 I scarcely know
 How far it may be so;
 I hesitate to let
 My thoughts incline
 To one who seems both much and little mine.

When I in mirrors look,
 And in them see
 Myself surveying me,
 As from a pictured book,
 I sometimes think he tries
 To meet me at the windows of my eyes:

But nothing real occurs
 For my poor sake;
 Pupil and iris make
 Unkindly barriers
 Between us, that remain
 To baffle me, again and yet again.

And just so much I know
 Of him : no more.
 And if I push each door
 Wide open as I go
 In search of him, he still
 Evades me ; and I fear he always will.

This tenement of clay
 We live in, must
 Soon crumble into dust,
 And vanish all away
 From any sight of men :
 And where will he and I be living then ?

CHARLES DALMON

The Bugles

YOU quiet lakes, and all you dreaming ponds
 And shadowy boughs with loads of drooping green,
 Whose waters have not fretted their dark shores
 These many years, and whose unfading leaves
 No wakening wind has troubled : know, your sleep
 Draws to a close, for all your glassy depths
 Shall blur beneath old troubles and your leaves
 Stir to the power of a forgotten wind.
 For bugles shall sound again from the darkening hill
 Out of the tented camp ; and the lonely down,
 Grown populous, roar like a country fair ;
 And all the lighted tents shine in the dusk
 As though a giant growth of lilies sprang
 Flame-bright upon the hill.

High up aloft,
 Mournful and clear and golden on the dusk,
 The sudden fire of bugles ! Fervid flights
 Of burning wings flash upwards and are gone
 And in the shallows of a darkened pool
 Dim buds have burst to floating cups of flame.
 O brave, immortal music, you awake
 Memories too poignant. Forests of the past
 Answer those fervid notes with other notes
 Sepulchral, far. Your clear reveille shakes
 The dark, unfretted waters of the mind
 Till all the surface quivers with keenest pain
 And, depth to depth, the searching trouble stirs
 Till all that watery world
 Thrills with new life that urges to the top
 Layers of dim memories hidden long from light ;

And years long dead, victories, endurances,
 And terrible happenings live again. Again
 In rain-swept darkness down the broken roads
 The drenched and sweating troops swarm towards the line,
 Stumbling with burdened backs and leaden hearts
 Into their new ordeal : on and on
 Through tunnels of the blind and timeless night,
 By wallowing lorries thrust into the ditch
 And pulsing tractors hauling monstrous guns ;
 Or in cold rain interminably halted
 By some unknown obstruction miles ahead ;
 Through fields that stink of carnage, yawn with holes
 Full of pale, stagnant water ; thicket-snares
 Of sharp-fanged wire ; through roar of murderous shells
 And gas and blood and fire, till the shaken mind
 Flares up with terror and the memory dies
 In tumult and blown smoke. Then slowly rise
 The pale forgotten faces of the dead—
 Cast off the rust of years, the mould of earth,
 And smile again, and laugh, and sing gay songs,
 And eat and drink in warm light of the sun
 In the good fellowship of adventurous souls
 Who have purged their hearts of fear. Too happy vision,
 Vainly denying death and the iron fact
 For those poor slaves of clay
 And us the fretful children of mortality.

For the buglers take the bugles from their lips,
 And time and Death come back with the failing light
 To numb the leaves and bind the lake's clear eyes
 And shroud the waters in a film of ice.
 And the heart takes up its sure, mechanic beat
 And the dull vision shrinks
 To outward things and the narrow pen of space.
 Layer under layer, sluggish as falling snow,
 The shaken sediments of memory sink
 Till the mind is tranquil as a block of ice.

So let them sink, but, sunken, they endure ;
 The fear purged out of them, they govern, mould,
 The hidden mind, and through its shadowy deeps
 Send up green leaves and long, slim, wavering stems
 All tipped with tight green buds
 That on a sudden morning crown the pool
 With flocks of floating lilies white as milk.

MARTIN ARMSTRONG

The first part of the History of Zachy Trenoy

WHEN the white-throat sang on Selena moor,
 And the Little Reeth road was washed with rain,
 And the sun on the yellow sweet gorse did pour
 His warmth, and the bracken fronds twinkled again—
 Over the road through Selena moor
 Drove Zachy Trenoy and his sweetheart Jane :
 With two yellow wheels and a plank for seat,¹
 And a hairy donkey with small, grey feet,
 With a bell on the hames and rope for rein,
 Drove Zachy Trenoy and his sweetheart Jane.

Zachy's face was like a thrush,
 His body thin as a bramble root,
 Zach had on his best green hat
 And his navy suit.
 Jane has graces manifold,
 Neither awkward, shy, nor bold,
 But fragrant, smooth and young ;
 And her lips such music hold
 That speak she either fast or slow,
 Still her tuneful voice will go
 As 'twere a song she sung
 —Yet she has a lisping tongue.

Sweetheart Jane in her muslin gown
 And a handsome hat from the market town,
 With a rose red as blood,
 A leaf and a bud,
 And a brim to halo her small, pale face,
 The straw all fretted with holes like lace,
 So when the sun peeps through the brim
 He weaves a web of shadows dim
 Around her big, green eyes and throws
 Freckles of light on her pointed nose.

But gayest of the three of them
 Pranced the ass, Jerusalem ;
 His small grey body, like a mat,
 Was combed until the hair lay flat,
 No gorse prickles in his ears,
 His twitching tail brushed free from burs
 —His collar where a buckle lacked
 Was tied with string, but what of that ?

His furry forehead proudly bore
 A brass medallion polished bright,
 And either side his cheek he wore
 A frilled rosette of red and white—
 And all his harness newly blacked.
 For this is Jane's donkey, Jerusalem Hony,
 The frolicsome, humoursome, impudent fellow,
 Who, when he's a mind to, can trot like a pony,
 And this is Jane's cart with a new coat of yellow,
 And this is Feast Friday in Reeth Church-town,
 When folk run races up on the down,
 And this is the ass that will put to shame
 Any ass that you like to name,
 Or Zachy Trenoy will be much to blame.

So while the white-throat sings on the thorn,
 And Jane's voice sings more sweet than he,
 And Zach's heart sings the sweetest of all,
 And the wheels groan fit to drown the three,
 And Jerusalem's hoofs make never a sound,
 Stepping along with his nose to the ground,
 They all climb over Selena hill ;
 And hear upon the light air borne
 —As though a giant threshed his corn—
 The throb and rumble of the sea.
 And from the level looking down,
 Behold how blue the waters burn
 About the bare green moors, and squat
 Grey tower of Reeth. So now they turn
 Westward in a gallant trot
 And clatter into Reeth Church-town.

Gay country folk are gathering on Reeth green ;
 Reeth green is bright with flags and wild with noise,
 With donkey carts careering in between
 The swerving crowds that part with yelling voice,
 Laughter and barking dogs and whistling boys.
 There children clamour where the ice-cream man
 Sweats smiling in his striped and gilded van ;
 In braided coats bandsmen from Gwavas town
 Make blare their sparkling brass and bulge their cheeks,
 And girls and youths go romping up and down
 Questing, with husky shouts and wanton shrieks,
 While the loud surf makes hubbub in the bay,
 And from their tipped-up carts the tethered donkeys bray.

Now through the din a whistle blows its bright
And piercing summons ; and with whoops of zest
Some to the racing take them and the rest,
A chequered, shifting mob of dark and light,
Stand round to watch, all clothed in Sunday best :
Old bodies in smooth black, young folk in white,
Old men in high straw hats, young women gay
In fluttering muslin, flimsy to display
The strong, bare arms beneath, and camisoles
New starched and brodered ; youths with shambling feet,
Faces a-grin, squash hats and buttonholes,
Old women with their petticoats a-trail,
Gossiping, heedless if the racers fail
Or win, and children scrambling through the rope
To scream around the winner ; there compete
The giggling maids, tripping with ankles tied,
Holding their flapping hats, and men in sacks
That hop and sprawl, boys shouting on the backs
Of jerseyed fishermen, who jog with wide
Bowlegged steps, and not to be outdone
Important greybeards chuckling as they run.

Zach, the little, lean and spry
Off with his coat and won his race,
Off with his waistcoat, but jumping high,
Caught his foot and cut his face,
And sulked awhile to see maids laugh
And hear the rabble's witless chaff.
So slouched beyond the ring to where
The donkeys in a motley crew,
Big and shaggy, small and clipped,
Rolled on the grass, or standing lipped
The salty turf, each roped with care,
By leg or bit, to the wheels he drew,
Of painted barrow, or coster's cart,
Or miner's plank, a jingle too,
With polished rail and cushions smart,
And a mouldy, black bath-chair,
That like a trampled beetle stood
Lopsided, shorn of half its hood.

Against Jerusalem leant Zach,
To contemplate awhile and wipe
His dusty face and light his pipe,

And folding shirt-clad arms did view
 With disrespect that motley crew
 Of donkeys : no, not one, thought Zach,
 Had four such legs, or such a spare
 Neat belly or so flat a back,
 So brawny a neck, so clean an eye,
 A way with them one half so spry,
 Or such a knowledgeable air,
 As the little grey ass on which he leant.

So chuckled in a dark content,
 Slapped Jerusalem's hairy side,
 Knuckled his nose with a sunburnt first,
 Thought no more of the jump he'd missed,
 But remembered the race he'd won with pride,
 And won the donkey race beside,
 Many times over—there in his head,
 Where everything is easy done,
 Falls made good and prizes won ;
 Till sweetheart Jane with a flush on her face
 Comes running to meet him out of the crowd,
 And so with oaths and brayings loud
 Every donkey is untied,
 Every driver gets to his place,
 Round go the yellow wheels and red,
 And the next race is the donkey race.

Jane she would drive,
 But Zachy he said " no,
 Because it takes a proper man
 To make a donkey go—
 A man to race, a maid to watch, a man to take the prize,
 To give to the pretty maid, all fair and friendliwise."

The prize is a tea-set
 Sprinkled with roses,
 The most handsome tea-set
 Zachy supposes
 That ever he set eyes on, with its roses green and red
 To shine on the dresser, when he and Jane do wed.

" Hey ! Hey ! Make way, boys, hey ! " the drivers yell,
 The crowd divides, cheering with mock applause,
 And in they scamper, take their stand and wait.
 Whips are collected, Zachy sits up straight,

His black eyes glitter, for Jerusalem's tail
 Is switching, and with tiny hoofs he paws
 The ground ; " eight rounds," the umpire shouts. " What *eight* ? "
 Thinks Zachy, " if 'twere twenty he would win it,
 None of those long-eared laggards would be in it
 With Jane's Jerusalem." " Make way, stand back,
 Clear all those young rapsallions off the track—
 Ready—now "—the whistle—and they're off.

Now from the crowd, like waves on stony shore,
 The shouts and clapping break in roar on roar,
 To see the little beasts in rash career
 Leaping like rabbits, running swift as deer,
 The barrows reeling and the carts asway,
 The bath-chair blundering wildly on its way,
 The jingle bounding with its cushions lost,
 The drivers on their planks like pancakes tossed,
 Or standing with bent knees and mouths agape,
 Bawling and wrenching see-saw at the rein.
 One waves his cap, another with his toes
 Hammers his donkey's haunch, another shakes
 A rattle full of peas, another blows
 A may horn, and with close shut teeth one makes
 The hiss and clatter of a shunting train.

Bounding goes Jerusalem,
 The yellow wheels leap after him,
 Slap, slap on the furry flank
 Fall the reins, with furry ears
 Switching round Jerusalem hears
 Noises that fly around the ring,
 Waning, growing, behind, before,
 Joining in a jumbled roar,
 And followed by the clamouring
 Of Zachy, bobbing on his plank.
 Jerusalem's body pricks with sweat,
 Joy in his blood Jerusalem feels,
 Jerusalem's feet leap swifter yet—
 Past the clattering coster's cart,
 Past the barrows and the smart
 New jingle with its varnished wheels,
 Past the blundering, black bath-chair,
 Past the howling drunken fellow
 That stamps his feet and beats the air—
 Past them all those wheels of yellow
 Flicker and sway. The crowd cheers on,

Zachy hunched to half his size
 Sits all tense, before his eyes
 The tea-set dances—Jerusalem shies
 At the man with the whistle—one round's done.

And thinks Jerusalem, slackening pace,
 "That was a brave and handsome race."

"What's this—go round again? Oh no,
 Another way if you please, I'll go
 But the same round, never!" "Get up there—whoa,
 Yip, yip!" "But where's the sense of it,
 Dragging a donkey's mouth till the bit
 Nigh breaks his jaw—all right, I'll go;
 For it seems to please this foolish man
 A beast must do the best he can
 Though under protest." So in disdain,
 With head held high, and ears held back
 And little grey feet leaping straight on the track,
 Ahead of all that clattering train
 Jerusalem goes round again.

But though his feet fly, in his brain
 A slow thought shapes, and heavy and plain
 It grows. Why should a donkey go
 Round and round for ever so,
 Hemmed in by a frenzied throng
 Of noise and faces, driven along
 By a driver shouting like a crow—
 With other donkeys after him
 Plunging endless, till he drop
 Worn out and dying for the whim
 Of a crazy mob? In a donkey's brain
 The ponderous thought is growing apace,
 That this race is a foolish race,
 So, thinks Jerusalem, "I'll stop."

Then Jerusalem stops dead
 And nigh sends Zachy on his head.

Zachy curses, Zachy shouts,
 Jerusalem's hairy back he clouts
 With doubled rein and bony fists,
 Even Jerusalem's tail he twists,
 Jerusalem in stubborn mood
 Stiffens his legs as made of wood;

Zachy watches with a groan
Rival donkeys one by one
Caper past him. Drivers' jeers
Jolting by, and rapturous cheers
Flung from the crowd, poor Zachy hears,
And nimble from his plank he skips,
With puckered face and eyes aflare,
To tug the bit with all his force—
Jerusalem with teeth laid bare,
Grins his mouth and curls his lips
And spraddles like a rocking-horse.

Shouting men in twos and threes
Leap from the mocking crowd and seize
The wheels and push—oh, foolish men,
Jerusalem backing takes his ease
Against the heaving cart, and when
It bumps into his buttocks, then
Down goes Jerusalem on his knees.
But Zachy gripped him round the chest
Panting aloud, till came the rest
And lifted him, and lifted him,
Again again, and tilted him
Upon his feet, but when they stopped,
Down again Jerusalem dropped.

Zachy, fuming, throttle dry,
Saw the drivers whisking by,
Jeering, covering round on round,
Felt the greatness of his wrong,
Felt he might begin to cry,
So kicked Jerusalem on the ground,
Smashed the tea-set in his head,
And elbowed sulky through the throng.

So off the course Jerusalem's led,
Walking now with humble pride,
For still through all his mock disgrace,
The thought lies stubborn in his head
That this race is a foolish race,
And that a donkey's justified.

"If I'd been driving him," said sweetheart Jane,
"He'd have gone round and round again."

"Drive him you may," said Zach, "for me—
 I'll drag the cart myself before
 I drive that plum-face any more,
 And why you're laughing I can't see."
 So half in earnest, half in fun
 They wrangled till the race was done,
 And when they found that he who won
 Was drunk, then Zachy did declare
 Race, prize and umpire all unfair.
 "For if I'd had a drop or two
 And walloped Jerusalem black and blue,
 I'd have been first and he behind,
 That's plain to see—but I'm too kind
 For racing. 'Tis a poor reward
 For living sober and working hard
 I say, when men that's drunkards get
 Tea-sets and all—it seems to me,
 If that's the way it's got to be,
 Every man had best go wet."

So off goes peevish Zachy down the hill
 To where the surf roars sunlit round the bay,
 And houses huddle close and turn away
 Their windows from the sea, and black boats fill
 The gaps between them ; there where faded blue
 Swings the Good Fortune sign, and sorrows may
 Be turned to good account, young Zachy goes
 On wooden bench to sit and drink and tell his woes.

Now Jerusalem and Jane
 On darkling green may wait in vain,
 While Zachy tells with winking eye,
 Just how he lost the race and why ;
 Till cloudy-brained and comforted,
 To all his nodding mates he'll show
 The way to make a donkey go—
 Spraddles his knees out, cracks his whip,
 And gurgling cries of "whoa" and "yip,"
 Drives in triumph round the floor,
 Spills his drink and calls for more,
 But finds himself outside the door.
 So in the starlight staggers home to bed,
 Singing and winning races in his head.

RUTH MANNING-SANDERS

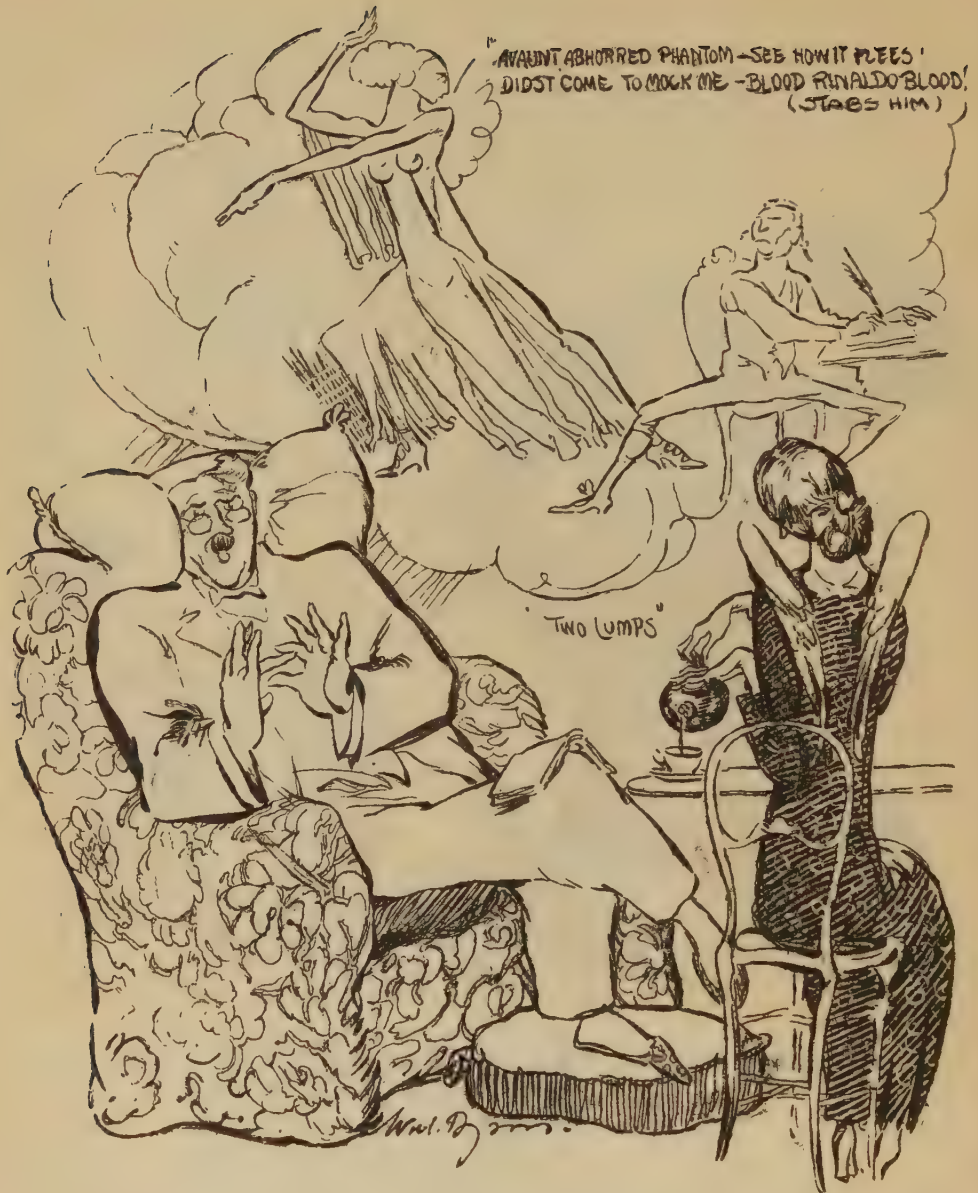


THE POETS—THE MUSES AND THE NEWER TASTES

Some Painful Cases

by Will Dyson

Case "A"—It was almost but yesterday that she was happily helping a Voice now gone from us to sing the newly noted Edifications inherent in mountain peaks, but to-day—! Is it right of her present collaborator—one of the muscular, the severed jugular, school—is it just of him to cause so much friction of the baser sort over her inability, try as she will, to forget the sweetness and the grammar of that earlier association?



In case "B" we have no actual physical cruelty to the Muse, but, in view of everything, one feels that she must sense a lack, an absence, as it were



In case "C" we have a case to shudder at—and pass on



While in case "D" we feel that to one of the ripely functioning temperament of this Muse there is, somehow, somewhere, a cruelty in her newer collaboration—a something as of starvation of the richer lymphatic centres—a something inhibited

TWO TALES

By C. K. SCOTT MONCRIEFF

"FREE VERSE"

VENETIA BANCOCK was so widely, not to say well connected that her first volume, *Coloured Waters*, had a circulation which the reviewers had not foreseen and were unable to prevent ; moreover, with as many of these as could be identified she had taken the precaution of inviting them quietly to tea, first, in her own "rather charming" flat. Her parents, who were dead, had been the prodigal son and daughter, respectively, of two very creditable families, each of which, feeling that it owed a debt of honour to the other, was always ready with a kind word, and often with a more edible form of hospitality, her father's relatives for poor Caroline's children, her mother's reciprocally for poor Henry's.

The kindest intentions do not, however, ordinarily soften creditable hearts to the purchase of even a "slim" volume, but at a time when the six-shilling novelist showed signs of regarding the Treasury note as the sole negotiable form of currency, three-and-sixpence, even for no more than four-and-twenty pages, was literally nothing ; besides, the less there was to read in a book, sometimes, the better ; so that, within a year, the five hundred copies for which Venetia had paid an enterprising publisher to pay an indifferent printer (who supplied the paper) had almost all made their way to the drawing-room tables of the friends of her generous and uncritical cousins.

Still, there is a limit ; and this had apparently been reached precisely at the date on which Venetia's *Pale Rainbows* made its confident appearance. Most of her relatives, when she met them in shops or at restaurants, would confess to having seen the new poems ; many were good enough to congratulate her upon her industry. But only Mrs. Montresor, who had married into Bayswater and could afford to be lavish, promised to buy a copy, and even that promise was uttered principally in the hope of extorting from Venetia's own lips the solution of a problem that had long vexed her kinswoman's well-nourished mind : "When people write books, Venetia—I've always wanted to know—do they have to write down every word that comes in the book ? I'm sure I should never have the time."

But one purchaser, however gratifying it may be to meet her face to face, does not make a "Second Impression," and Venetia's anxieties were in no way allayed when the remainder season began to loom upon her horizon. As a last resort she determined to consult her brother.

Justinian Bancock was an indeterminate young man of whom perhaps the nicest thing that had been said by his contemporaries was that, at any rate, he could not be living by his wits. By what on earth else he did

live (their parents had left not a brass farthing between them) even his sister had never learned ; it appeared to be something that was perpetually about to involve him in the obligation to go abroad with " a fellow he knew," but as she had seen him, a few nights ago only, at the Ballet it was with a fair certainty of his being at least in London, and a hope that his occupation would not be such as must screen him from his sister's gaze that she presented herself at his " residential chambers " shortly before luncheon, on a Friday morning in November.

The weather was inclement, and her brother from home. Venetia waited. His sitting-room had a social rather than a literary air ; yet it contained two familiar volumes—her own, which she moved into slightly greater prominence, lest any other visitor should arrive—and a third, in manuscript, in which, as it lay open upon the table, she was startled to recognise the familiar profiles of " free verse." Verse fully as free, a momentary glance assured her, as anything of her own (about which there was not, of course, the least suspicion of " moral " disarmament) with a more daring incoherence of meaning than she had ever attempted, " cadences " in plenty, and an attractive use of alliteration. Justinian had been letting himself go with a vengeance. The poem that lay exposed to her curiosity began with a couplet that strangely moved its reader :

The page gapes :
Apes' paws pass apace

This was stronger, her generous soul admitted, than anything in *Pale Rainbows*, stronger even than the first roseate flush of *Coloured Waters* ; what freedom, what cadence, what " significant form " !

But it was time for luncheon. Venetia slipped the book into the large black silk bag which she kept for carrying poetry in, and left. That evening her family solicitor (the one heirloom she had definitely inherited) telephoned to her. Justinian, it appeared, had now gone irreducibly abroad, though not so much with " a fellow he knew " as to escape from fellows who claimed to know him, and his address would not, for the present, be made public. . . .

The appearance of *Monks and Mannequins*, by Justinian Bancock, caused an appreciable stir in an otherwise dull publishing season. What is known to journalists as " space " was allotted to it, among " New Books and Reprints," in *The Times Literary Supplement* (which gave the exact dimensions of the book, and the number of its pages), while a " critic " in one of the Sunday newspapers was understood to have said that it would recall *Piers Plowman*, the published comparison to *Piers Gynt*, being due, one assumed, to a compositor's error. Two firms produced pirated editions simultaneously in cities as far apart as Seattle (Wash.) and Boston, and it was against one of these that the Kwikrite Shorthand Inc.—a name new to Venetia—won the first of those actions which laid waste for ever the claim that she had so hopefully staked for a family acre upon Mount Parnassus. The " Key " to their *Shorthand Exercises*,

Part I, was strictly copyright, it appeared, in all countries signatory to the Berne Treaty, and Justinian's rendering of the exercises themselves (made some years earlier, while he was momentarily aspiring to a private secretaryship, and discovered and abandoned in the course of a hurried removal) had been, even though made without access to the key, perfectly correct, the only correct thing, indeed, that he could be remembered ever to have done.

LIMITED EDITIONS

LOUISA PERTALOUGH was the only child of two comfortable and contented parents situated in the very heart of residential South Kensington, upon one of those great, horizoning thoroughfares along which young men may be observed to proceed, with the most honourable intentions, every Sunday afternoon. If, in other words, Louisa had stayed at home, going once a year, under proper surveillance, to the Exhibition of the Royal Academy, and dancing, when necessary, in the Empress Rooms, she might by now very possibly have been married, if not within the bounds of the Peerage (though these are always capable of expansion) at any rate somewhere in the "Companionage, etc.," which forms so indispensable an adjunct to that volume.

But Louisa, fortunately for posterity, was of sterner stuff, the stuff which made Drake and Frobisher, Cœur-de-Lion and Disraeli (and, through these men, England) what they were (and what England is); hers was the explorer's habit, the colonist's, the cultivator's, the creator's; in a word, genius.

Beginning at an early age with a basketful of silkworms, a model handloom and a selection of Maypole soaps, she had throughout a whole London season dressed her dolls herself; after which she felt, somehow, that she was too old for dolls. Later in life a fretsaw and a paintbox had helped her to produce quite a number of little wooden figures, many of which, if one looked at them not too critically, bore a distinct resemblance to one's favourite actor or actress in his or her latest London success. Several people had pronounced these figures to be "awfully clever," and one or two of them had actually found purchasers at a charity bazaar to which Louisa had sent a generous consignment. But after all, as she had heard it splendidly put in a friend's studio one evening by a tawny-bearded young lion of the Canning Town group, who had successfully defied the crushing classicism of Whitechapel and were erecting an academy of their own, "there is something dreadfully sterile about mere creation." Hers was rather, Louisa felt, the mother's, or the middleman's part; to present the created object to an applauding world.

It is probably on record, somewhere, who discovered or invented the art of printing, though it is not known why. It is demonstrable, however, that this art, which has brought pleasure to thousands and profit to not a

few of our countrymen, has so greatly developed in England in the last four centuries as to be now, in the mature opinion of the Ministry of Health, "an indispensable element in our national existence." Caxton (who appears to have set up his press actually within the precincts of the Palace of Westminster, where for many years he supplied successive Chairmen of the Kitchen Committee daily during the Session with printed menus, copies of which are now extremely rare) used wooden type, while this story, should it ever see the light of publication, will most probably be cast in an amalgam of various base metals; Louisa's type—for it was in Caxton's tradition, rather than Drake's or Frobisher's, Cœur-de-Lion's or Disraeli's that she was impelled to follow—was of india-rubber.

She had read a good deal about typography, which was apparently what they called it, in a magazine called THE LONDON MERCURY which her aunt Lucy (who was frightfully clever, and had often sent in essays to *Books of To-day*, and indeed knew Mr. Humphreys personally) used to bring home at the end of every month (but quite clean, really) from her club, the Lady Divers'. She was familiar, therefore, with such terms as "old face" (which was like the dreadful nickname some of them had had, at school, for the headmistress) and "serif" (which had something to do, she thought, with the runaway marriage that silly girl Isabel Fumbridge had made at Edinburgh, with a naval officer, during the war), but she could never quite make out from the articles what they meant, and the plan of engraving her pages on copper plate seemed too difficult and expensive, besides needing acids, which her mother would never allow her to use. The toy counter at Gamlingay's was her foundry, and capable of supplying her with as much type as she was ever likely to require, at a shilling the box, including a pad and a little bottle of very sticky ink. The printing itself was great fun, though very difficult. You first of all "set up" the type with a pair of tweezers between parallel lines of metal on a wooden board like a hairbrush, then you had to go and wash your hands very carefully before touching the paper, of which you spread out as many sheets as would lie without overlapping on the schoolroom table. Then you inked the type, and pressed it down tremendously hard upon the paper; and if you didn't move it at all you were all right, but if you did the sheet was spoiled, and had to be thrown away. After the first few months Louisa's hand learned to control the type with comparative certainty, and at least half of her printed pages were good enough to show to visitors, and even to ask people to buy. She contented herself at first with quite short pieces, that could be done with one box of type; nice bits from Stevenson about courage when one was ill, and all that sort of thing, and some verses by an American poet called Whittier, that she had got as a prize at school (only this was a mistake; because it had been a quite different man, something Whitman, that she had heard them all talking about at the studio). Then the most wonderful thing happened; she received an order to print a book.

It was quite a short book, for there would only be eight pages, some with no printing on them, by Venetia Bancock, and it was to be called *Jades*. There were three poems in it ; the first was about a Swedish governess, and was lovely ; the second—Louisa hardly liked to print the second, as it didn't seem quite nice, but Venetia assured her that it was all right, really, and was about a person who had said beastly things about her brother. (Justinian Bancock had been travelling for the last year, in Sicily, for his health, which had been dreadfully bad since quite early in the war.) The third poem was, of course, about Queen Victoria, and was very bitter. Then there were to be two illustrations ; these were copies of two jade ornaments that Venetia had in her flat, and must be printed in green ink, so as to "lend" the book a "distinctive charm." This part seemed very difficult to Louisa, but she knew that two of Venetia's uncles had married "Honourables" and so she hardly liked to refuse. Only, there was no green ink in the house, and even if she got some she had never been any good at drawing, and if she copied the illustrations on to the printed sheets she would be sure to spoil half of them. She might, of course, do the illustrations first, and print the poetry afterwards, but that would mean wasting a great many too, and perhaps smudging all the illustrations when she pressed the type down. Venetia, who knew all about books, having published several already, told her that the illustrations would be printed upon the sheets, and would only be coloured by hand. This puzzled Louisa a great deal at first, because she did not know how anything could be printed except from type, and surely there was no type to be had a bit like Venetia's jade ornaments ; but the poetess took her to see a young man with a moustache and a cough, who smoked far too many cigarettes and lived somewhere behind Wardour Street that you went down steps to, and he promised to have what he called the "blocks" finished next week, and to send the sheets along to Louisa with the illustrations already printed. They would be dreadfully expensive, but Venetia was going to pay.

One thing was quite certain : now that she was taking orders to print books, Louisa must leave home. Not in any bad sense, of course ; Louisa was a thoroughly "nice" girl, and she would still be at home for all her meals, and to sleep. But the schoolroom table at Brifrons Gardens was not large enough, really, to do books on, and the printer's ink did leave such horrid stains in the bathroom basin when she washed her hands. Besides, Venetia said she must have a "colophon" saying where the book was printed, and how many copies and all that ; and "printed at South Kensington" would be ridiculous, Venetia said ; too dreadfully "bourgeois." Louisa didn't at all like that word. It meant a particular kind of type, she knew ; but she was sure it must mean something horrid as well about South Kensington people, and though her family was not as "good" as the Bancocks, still, her parents were perfect dears, and everyone knew that Venetia's used to run away with all sorts of people, and had always been meeting each other at railway stations abroad and

having to make friends again because nobody else would speak to either of them. But she didn't repeat this out loud, and anyhow she quite agreed that she ought to set up her press somewhere where people were more likely to want good printing done.

II

She was extraordinarily lucky, because she saw an advertisement in the paper that very day of a place which seemed just the thing, and she went at once and found it had been taken by a tobacconist, but she could have it for a week as his sub-tenant, until he moved in his stock. So she took it at once, out of the money her godmother would be sure to send on her next birthday. It had romantic associations, too, for a printer, for it was directly behind the Caxton Hall, what they called a "lock-up shop"; and there was no basement because the District Railway station was just underneath. So she could have a season ticket, and be at home for all her meals in a few minutes, by simply locking up the shop and asking the policeman to see that no one broke in while she was away. The name for the "business" was still a difficulty, but her old governess, Miss Tidmarsh, who was very well read, made a splendid suggestion, and so it was called "Go, Lyttel Boke."

The sheets duly arrived, with the illustrations beautifully printed and coloured in green by the man with the cigarettes, on Saturday afternoon. There were twenty-five of them, Venetia having decided to have just that number in the first edition, and more printed a little later, when those were all sold. Monday was a Bank Holiday, and though she was eager to begin work, Louisa did not quite like to open "Go, Lyttel Boke" that day, because of the Trade Unionists. She had heard a great deal about them from the Vicar of South Kensington, who took in the *Morning Post* every day, and the *Times* only on Saturdays, because of the sermons, and she thought that if the printers did have a trade union, and knew that she was working on a Bank Holiday, they might come and attack her. But when she saw that the evening papers were being sold, she decided that printers couldn't have a trade union, or at any rate wouldn't mind her printing on a Bank Holiday, and so she got the parlourmaid to telephone to the Oratory for a cab, and drove, with the illustrated sheet and her boxes of type upon her knee, to the Caxton Hall, where she paid the driver and told him that she would walk the rest of the way; because, for all she knew, he was a trade unionist himself, and would drive off and tell the others what she was doing.

I believe Dante says, somewhere, what happens to people who work on Bank Holidays; anyhow, it happened to Louisa Pertalough. First of all, when she was trying to fit the key into the door, she dropped the parcel of illustrated sheets, and as it had been raining a good deal and they fell into a puddle, two of the twenty-five were quite spoiled. Then,

when she got inside, the table was dusty, and that spoiled a third, because people would never buy a book that had dust marks on its pages. And then she upset the ink-bottle over four more, when she was spreading them out. But she decided that she would save up and buy all the spoiled copies herself. Venetia was selling them at four shillings each, so that even if she spoiled the whole lot it would only be five pounds, and Venetia had promised to give her ten shillings for printing them. She set up her type from a copy of the poems in Venetia's handwriting, which was not very clear, and began printing upon the spoiled sheets, just to see. Each sheet had to be folded across twice, so as to make eight pages ; the first was the title page, and the second had just : " This edition is limited to twenty-five copies, numbered and signed, of which this is No. ..." The third had the poem about the governess, and it ended on the top of the fourth, where there was an illustration. The second poem was on page 5, and the other illustration on page 6, and the poem about Queen Victoria on page 7, and on the last page there was just :

printed.at.the
sign.of.the.go.
lyttel.boke.in.
the.city.of.w
estminster.on
the.seventh.d
ay.of.augus
t.nineteen.
hundred.and
twenty.two
exegi.mon
umentum.a
ere.per
ennius.

Louisa was glad that she had the spoiled sheets to practise on, because she was able to correct several slips that she had not noticed at first, and she was quite sure that everything was all right before she printed the first good one. When she had done it and let it dry she looked at it proudly and, taking a pen, wrote in on page 2 after " this is No." the figure " 1," and then her signature, with a great flourish, " Louisa J. Pertalough." Suddenly she remembered that it was Venetia who ought to sign the copies, and she felt horribly afraid, because she was sure that Venetia would be angry. Then, as she was printing the next copy, she heard a rattling in the corner, and she was certain it must be a mouse. Louisa was a very brave girl, so she stooped down to look for the mouse, but the rattling only grew louder and louder until the whole room shook, and she thought that the trade unionists must have found out what she was doing and plotted to blow her up. She was dreadfully afraid for a moment, but then the rattling stopped, and she saw what a silly girl she had been. It was

only a train going into St. James's Park Station, and that reminded her that it was time to go home to tea. But when she went back to the table she found that the ink-bottle had upset again, and the ink had soaked through all the sheets except the last two. She printed one very carefully without a single accident, and wrapped up the other in tissue paper; then she put them both away on a clean shelf and locked up the shop and ran downstairs to the train.

Next morning she returned to "Go, Lyttel Boke," and printed the last sheet, but being a strictly truthful girl put on the back "this eighth" instead of "the seventh." Besides, the seventh had been Bank Holiday. Then she waited for Venetia to come.

Venetia was very angry when she saw all the spoiled sheets, and only half pleased when Louisa offered to pay for them. She said that the illustrations alone had cost more than five pounds, and that people didn't publish poetry to make money, but so that the world might enjoy beauty, and how could the world enjoy what Louisa Peralough kept shut up in a drawer in South Kensington. When she saw the copy which Louisa had signed by mistake, she turned quite pale with anger and said that poetry was a vocation, whereas printing was merely a trade, like reviewing; and how dared Louisa sign her poems? Louisa was very sorry, of course, and quite frightened, and hardly ventured to tell Venetia what she had just noticed, that she had printed one of the two "good" copies the wrong way round, so that the illustrations came in the wrong order. However, Venetia didn't mind that a bit, only she said that as the copies were different, and one was dated "this eighth day of August," it had better be made into a second edition. So Louisa printed "Second Edition" on the title-page, and Venetia went out to Victoria Street and got a lovely box of chocolates tied up in silky blue string which they threaded through each of the two copies to make it hold together; and they put them in the window and then ate the chocolates while they waited for booklovers to arrive and buy them.

No one at all came for quite a long time; then three very young soldiers passed, from the Wellington Barracks, and stopped and looked in at the window; then they nudged one another with their canes, and one of them said something, and they all laughed and sauntered on. Then a woman-policeman came up and looked at *Jades* with a pained but dutiful look, as if she felt that it ought to be prosecuted. Then two rather stout gentlemen came out of the station, and they looked so friendly and nice that Louisa felt sure they must be Mr. Belloc and Mr. Chesterton, who (she knew) spoke at meetings in the Caxton Hall. But she didn't say anything about them, because Venetia hated contemporary literature, and thought it "démodé." Presently Venetia had to go, and as it was getting late Louisa locked up the shop and went home to luncheon.

Her father scolded her a good deal before he would give her the money for the shop and to pay Venetia for the spoiled copies, but her mother

comforted her by saying that they were all going to Bexhill-on-Sea next week, for a month, and that if she behaved well one of her aunts had almost decided to present her at Court next season. After that it was impossible for her to sell poems about Queen Victoria, especially with the Guards' barracks so very near. Luckily the tobacconist began to move in that afternoon, and when she paid him the week's rent he told her she had a rare head for business, which comforted her a good deal. But the first and second editions of *Jades* remained unsold.

Venetia Bancock says that Louisa is a "chit," whatever that means. She has taken to reciting her poems now, which ensures her a wider public.

MAURICE HEWLETT'S LATER VERSE AND PROSE

By J. B. PRIESTLEY

MAURICE HEWLETT was his own best example. He would have us all return to poverty and plain living, and there find ourselves ; and he himself did return, as it were, to verbal poverty and plain speaking, planted his feet firmly upon the earth, and indeed found himself. There could be no better illustration of the successful working of his theory, and it is a great pity that he was debarred from using it. This change in Hewlett's matter and manner has already been noticed, but it has not had the attention it deserves. In the Preface to his *Wiltshire Essays*, our author himself has complained bitterly of the way in which he is still confused in the public mind with the frolics of his youth :

Notwithstanding that full five-and-twenty years have coursed over this frosted pow since I belauded the youth of Italy, notwithstanding that I have published seven volumes of poems, and scarcely a volume in prose which was not conceived as a poem is conceived, it is still the fact that six readers out of ten expect every new book of mine that reaches them to be more or less an echo of *The Forest Lovers*. What am I to do ? It imputes to me incredible stupidity, itself is incredibly stupid—and what can one do with stupidity except foam at the mouth ? Somebody sent me a specimen of his prowess in that kind only the other day, a chuckle-headed “ K. K.” writing in I know not what journal. “ Admirers of Mr. Hewlett's graceful pen,” he said—or words to that effect—“ will be disappointed when they open *In a Green Shade* and find that it is not a swashbuckling romance . . .” And so on. What are you to do ?

There was, of course, nothing to be done, except to peg away and to keep one's temper. An artist with a love of experiment in this country is in a mournful situation : if he is unsuccessful, it does not matter what he does, because nobody cares ; but if he suddenly becomes successful, he then develops into a kind of institution and people go to him for little pictures of two cows in a field, or paradoxical essays, or swashbuckling romances, and are as surprised and resentful if they find anything else there as they would be if they went to a billiard saloon and discovered a lecture on relativity in progress.

Before the publication of *The Song of the Plow*, an event that we may regard as the turning point, Hewlett had proved himself, at least to all who used their eyes and did not blindly follow literary fashions, to be one of our cleverest, most versatile and delightful men-of-letters. Somewhat tentatively I make this reservation about those who followed fashions, because I have a fancy that he was probably a little underestimated by the bright advance guards of criticism, if only because he

elected to follow romance at a time (after the Stevensonian wave had expended itself) when romance was going out of fashion and the realistic and sociological manners were becoming the vogue. Verse, very mannered, on classical and mediæval themes ; some rather wooden Icelandic adventures ; mediæval and Italian tales, all colour and bloom and fine airs ; one closely-knit historical romance, *The Queen's Quair* ; some stories, very artfully contrived, of the Regency period ; and a trilogy of modern novels, which contained some particularly irritating personages ; these were the wares he brought to market in those days, bright glittering stuff that could never cumber any stall for long. At the risk of appearing ungrateful, however, it must be admitted that there was about all these things just that suspicion of the masquerade, that delight in adopting and maintaining a difficult attitude, that fully conscious zest in verbal jugglery and literary play in general, which mark the man whose talent and energy are vastly superior to his themes, the author whose powers of expression are better than his powers of conception, the brilliant crotchety amateur, or perhaps the professional at the playful, decorative stage, the Shakespeare of *Love's Labour's Lost*. Hewlett did some magnificent work, and always showed himself an artist, bent on grappling with and overcoming new difficulties, and not a manufacturer, turning out the required article ; but nevertheless I do not think he ever completely found himself ; his work had echoes of other voices in it, and often suggested that its author had derived his inspiration at second-hand, from other books, rather than from his own interpretation of what was stirring about him ; and always it looked as if the man was greater than his theme and task, and so was able to show off his jugglery and sleight-of-hand. He might have been called *The Stooping Author*.

The change comes with *The Song of the Plow*, that epic of the labouring countryman which was an old project of his and perhaps one that he was so doubtful of ever realising that, very generously, he presented it to one of his creatures, Gervase Poore, the poet who rhapsodises and glooms through *Mrs. Lancelot* and *Bendish*. The poem itself, however, is only one, though, I think, the finest, manifestation of Hewlett's faith, and it is to this faith that we must turn. His general attitude, which must be described but need not, I think, be criticised in this place, is easily discovered, for, leaving the poems on one side, in all his three books of essays he sturdily pronounces his creed and is nothing if not dogmatic. It is essentially the attitude of a poet of an aristocratic temper who, returning to the country, has found in the people there, or at least in those of them whom he chooses to call the Peasantry, that stability and respect for tradition which seem to make a welcome and kindly retreat from the Walpurgis night of modern ideas. He takes his stand upon tradition, is a determined anti-intellectual, and appears to entertain a hearty contempt for our recent panaceas. In his first preface, he remarks :

The point is that, having worked hard for a good many years, I can now consider my latter end under conditions favourable to leisurely and extended thought,

sometimes in a garden made, if rightly made, in my own image, sometimes in a house which was built aforetime, in a day when men wrought for posterity as well as for themselves. In such seed-plots it is impossible that one's thoughts should not take colour as they rise. Whithersoever I look I see as much permanency as is good for any sojourner upon earth ; I see embodied tradition, respect for Nature's laws, attention to beauty, subservience to use ; all this within doors. Outside, the trees, the flowers are my calendar ; the birds chime the hours ; periodically the church-bell calls the travellers home.

And a little further on, he comes to closer grips with his matter :

I have my pet nostrums, of course. I believe in Poverty, Love and England, and am convinced that only through the first will the other two thrive. I want men to be gentlemen and women to be modest. I want men to have work and women to have children. . . .

The essays that follow, in all three books, hardly ever lose sight of these axioms. Dean Inge could not make Hewlett's flesh creep, because the picture the Dean paints of our last and worst state, when we are once more " a small, hardy, fishing and pastoral people," is the very picture that delighted Hewlett, who boldly declared :

Personally, I not only believe that, but (and there perhaps I part company with the Dean) look forward to it. My one regret is that I shall not be alive to see it. A confederation of the size of ours will be a more unconscionable time a-dying than King Charles was. I remember once writing that if a little England was good enough for Queen Elizabeth and Sir Walter Raleigh, it was good enough for me ; but what is perhaps more to the purpose is to point out that, before the war, and I think also since, the smallest nations of Europe have held the highest proportion of happy and prosperous citizens: Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Switzerland. It is difficult also to see how it can be, if poverty makes contentment for an individual, that it should not for a group of individuals, a nation. I, who was once rich and now am poor, seriously declare that I had not the gleam of a notion what contentment was until I became as I am.

But Hewlett's optimism was grounded upon his belief, which he shared with Mr. Belloc and Mr. Chesterton, in the Peasantry :

There is one class or nation of men, which he (Dean Inge) has lost sight of altogether, and that is the Peasantry. So long as that class can be contentedly settled here, with sons to marry and daughters to be married, there is no fear of degeneration. That brings me to a most curious conclusion ; for that nation of men, which may be our last, was also our first. The Peasantry in this island has survived some two thousand years of servitude ; and though it is now relatively small, it is not so small but that it can replenish our country. . . . I dare say it can be asserted of every country in Europe, west of the Adriatic, that its peasantry was the first of men there, and will be the last to go. They are, as it were, the very stone-crop, the flowers of the field. The Dean deplores the approaching extinction of his own class. It will not be extinguished if it once more mates with the Peasantry.

In another place, discussing the possible departure of Capital from this island and with it a large proportion of our population, industrial workers

and the like, he describes the situation in which the remnant will find itself :

Of what, of whom, will the remnant consist ? Of those, firstly, so rooted in the soil of this England that they cannot be torn out of it ; our agricultural, fishing, seafaring, small-trading population, the first here, the last to go, the soundest, healthiest, steadiest, most laborious, most patient of our nation. They will be, as they have generally been, the nucleus. Others will be added to whom the call of tradition, ancestry, association, and what we know as the heartstrings, outvails that of luxury and ease ; others again who have religious, sentimental, philosophical inklings of the blessings of poverty, chastity and obedience. Many of the adventurous will remain to probe a new life which cannot fail of adventure, and of much more adventure than the old ; for when you have everything there is nothing to get ; and when you have nothing there is everything. Scientists, artists, men of letters (but not " best-sellers ") ; clergymen, lawyers, doctors—all of these : in fine, any class of men to which, when leisure of mind is in the balance, easy money is not the prime good. There's for the remnant.

That is as far as we need go, sociologically, though Hewlett gives us more detailed views of the matter in his *Extemporary Essays*. But everywhere, it is clear, he clings to the countryman, the Peasant, because it is he who follows tradition, worships Saint Use (as Hewlett phrases it in more than one place), whereas in every other class, our author, with something like terror, sees tradition failing. Capital snarls and Labour roars ; masters will not pay and workmen will not work ; husbands will not cherish their wives and wives will not obey their husbands ; unsavoury and lawless adventures are all too common ; young men are without faith and for ever jeer at authority ; young women smoke and loll and either have babies without husbands or husbands without babies ; there is little faith and few works ; and all classes show the same symptoms ; but the Peasantry, out of reach of fashion and abiding by the old ways, the least of all ; so let us cherish the Peasantry. This is Hewlett's doctrine, and it is worth remarking that he had been driven to accept it by two special needs that belong to the two different capacities in which he chose to act. He was, first, a poet. It is his own description of himself, and it is quite accurate :

If I am to deal with life it must be in my own way, for there's no escape from one's character. I may be a good poet or a bad one—that's not for me to say ; but I am a poet of sorts. Now a poet does not observe like a novelist. He does not indeed necessarily observe at all until he feels the need of observation. Then he observes, and intensely. He does not analyse, he does not amass his facts ; he concentrates. He wrings out quintessences ; and when he has distilled his drops of pure spirit he brews his potion. Something of the kind happens to me now, whether verse or prose be the Muse of my devotion. A stray thought, a chance vision, moves me ; presently the flame is hissing hot. Everything then at any time observed and stored in the memory which has relation to the fact is fused and in a swimming flux. Anon, as the Children of Israel said to Moses, " There came forth this calf."

Now the advantage to a poet of such a doctrine as that which Hewlett held is that it is at once simple and emotional, and being based largely upon tradition, it is, as it were, half-poetised already. Most modern social and political doctrines are useless to the poet as a poet, although he may accept one or other of them in his private capacity as a thoughtful citizen, simply because they are much too complex and do not lend themselves to poetical treatment. Our present intellectual state-socialism, for example, with its statistics and committees of enquiry and minority reports, is clearly a prose affair. Shelley's doctrine of universal revolt and love and human perfectibility had the necessary simplicity, it was the kind of large, sweeping gesture that becomes a poet, but it was entirely cut off from tradition, and Shelley always had to leave the earth and take everything into his own rarefied upper air. Fortunately for Hewlett, who was no Shelley, his own doctrine demanded no such flights, but stood rooted in the soil and fetched colour and bloom from all his readers' memories, for however much we may be opposed to tradition, it has always an advocate in our remembered emotions, our older memories, laid away in lavender, so that a poet who takes his stand upon tradition may be said to have half won his reader before he has set down a word. But during the last ten years of his life, Hewlett was not only a poet, he was also what we may call, for want of a better word, a moralist. He had always a sharp eye for a man, a delight in character, but in his last years, he not only tried to understand, he judged; he was not content merely to explain a man, but always went on to pass sentence, not arbitrarily or harshly, on the one hand, nor with that irritating god-like detachment, on the other, but as a man who has lived his life, discovered for himself what there is of good and evil in it, and set up his standards accordingly; as a man, at once passionate and thoughtful, might speak of his neighbours. His biographical interests are easily discovered in his essays, and it is significant that he preferred to review biographies, memoirs, letters, and so on; in short, any books that showed him a fellow human being. As he was a moralist, he had to have standards to which he could refer every phase of conduct; as he was an elderly moralist, he disliked the looseness and laxity of these later times; and as he was a poet and not a philosopher, he did not try to invent an ethical system of his own; so that here again we may say that he was almost compelled to take his stand upon tradition, which demanded that men should work and have faith and that women should be pure and bear children. Thus, the poet and the moralist joined hands.

This brings us to his capital achievement, *The Song of the Plow*. Not only is it his capital achievement, but it is also the best long poem (it has nearly five thousand lines) of our time, and perhaps it is the most neglected. The persons who are forever crying out for sustained work from our poets, who ask for strong meat, something to get their teeth into, in short, the critics, are the very persons who are responsible for this sad neglect. Thus, for example, at the time when the poem was first published, in the autumn of 1916, the one weekly review entirely

devoted to literature and the arts, the *Athenæum*, gave the *Song of the Plow* (which appears in its index as the *Sons of the Plow*) a beggarly two hundred words or so of very faint praise, clearly dominated by the conviction of the reviewer, who evidently favoured an *a priori* method of criticism, that it was impossible to write an epic on the subject of Hodge. Again, in the three supplementary volumes of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* that cover the last ten years, there is an article on the literature of the period, fairly long, authoritative, and bristling with names, but nowhere in this article is there any mention of the *Song of the Plow*. This omission is serious, but the next one takes us into the realm of pure farce, for not only is the poem not given any mention in the general article, but it is also omitted from the list of works in the short article devoted to Hewlett himself; everything is mentioned but this one great work, the poet's own darling; it is as if *Paradise Lost* were to be omitted from a bibliography of Milton. Not all the critics were so blind, of course, for one or two of them strove hard to secure some recognition for the poem and did at least succeed in carrying it into its second edition, where it seems to have remained in a decent obscurity ever since. Many of us who were busy with other things in the autumn of 1916 probably glanced at the poem, noted, with approval, its robust masculine air, and quietly rejoiced in the fact that there was at least one poet who was not indulging in either patriotic rant, on the one hand, or egotistical whining, on the other; but having done this, we probably allowed both the poem and its author to fade out of our memory. To turn back to the poem now is to do more than recapture our first admiration for it; for high above the ruined contraptions of stucco, lath and plaster, it rises like a monument. A fine generous mood has been caught and fixed for ever.

As we have seen, Hewlett's beliefs made it possible for him to attempt a long poem with some chance of success, for they were grounded upon tradition and were at once simple and passionate, and therefore ripe for poetry. But a faith, however passionately it may be held, will not carry an epic to a triumphant conclusion; that most difficult form demands faith, passion, sincerity, but it also demands exquisite craftsmanship, and it is Hewlett's craftsmanship that must engage our attention. At a first glance, the general scheme of the poem is very attractive and suggests no special difficulties. Hewlett believed that the peasantry of this country, represented by the figure of Hodge, really form a separate nation (they are British with a strong English mixture of blood, as opposed to the governing class, which is Latin-French), and it is the history of this governed race from the Norman Conquest up to our own time with which he presents us in the *Song of the Plow*. In his Preface, he puts the argument in Aristotle's manner:

A certain man, being in bondage to a proud Conqueror, maintained his customs, nourisht his virtues, obeyed his tyrants, and at the end of a thousand years found himself worse off than he was in the beginning of his servitude. He then lifted his head, lookt his master in the face, and his chains fell off him.

And one does not need to be a poet to realise the attraction of such a theme. Kings come and go, armies march and countermarch, men talk in Parliament or rot on gibbets, but through it all, Hodge remains at his plow and bears upon his broad back all the fighting and junketing, the coloured prides and gilded treacheries, of those whose very existence is to him nothing but a strange rumour, a moving splash of colour on the road, a little jangling noise in the distance. The seasons return and with them his round of cares, and these are permanent while all else shifts and fades or goes clanging down to its doom. But we are not to be treated to a bucolic idyll ; we are to see :

Hodge crucified,
Like Him Who on His rood hung bare !

we are to hear :

. . . . the grumbled low refrain,
'The broken heartstrings' undertones
Which thro' the clash and gallant strain
Of warring legions, thro' the groans
Of them they war on, thro' the blent
Organs and trumpets, creaks and drones
The lordings' way to tournament,
To love of women, pride of men,
To crowning or to parliament.

And there are two great difficulties in front of the poet. In the first place, in order to carry out his scheme, he has to sketch for us almost a thousand years of English agrarian history, a subject with which Hewlett's work in the Land Records Office made him familiar. But rhymed history is one thing, and poetry another. There is, it is clear, a dead weight of material here that will have to be given life and movement, touched with emotion, and transformed into something shining and beautiful. Every epic poet has to face this difficulty. Instead of lifting it up, giving everything in it a touch of sublimity, as, for example, Milton did with his great argument, Hewlett, having very different matter to vivify, adopted another method ; he preferred to sing rather than to chisel, and forced the whole mass into swift movement by the sheer force of his passion. It was, however, his choice of metre that enabled him to send his learning skimming down the full tide of his passionate song. Knowing and loving his Dante, he elected to write his epic in *terza rima*, but unlike most of our experimenters, for example, Shelley and R. W. Dixon (who used *terza rima* in his long poem *Mano*), Hewlett very wisely decided for a short and vigorous line, namely, the octosyllabic. Handling this unusual measure with great dexterity, he was able to be passionate, scornful and pitiful in turn, for in his hands the measure combines something of the tightness and hardness of the epigrammatic modes with the clash and ring, the swift forward movement of the ballad. Without ever sacrificing

the unity that the poem demands, he can yet satisfy half-a-dozen different moods. He can paint a picture with a few broad strokes :

Behold them on the sky-line thrown
 Like giant shapes of riven rock,
 He and his team on the world's rim
 Creeping like the hands of a clock.
 Or in wet meadows plashy and dim
 When winter winds blow shrill and keen,
 See him bank up the warp and swim
 The eddying water over the green ;
 Or follow up the hill the sheep
 To where the kestrels soar and lean,
 And from her form the hare doth leap
 Quick and short, and lightly flies
 Before him up the grassy steep
 Where cloakt and crookt he climbs. . . .

Or he can suddenly swoop down from his eagle's height, and give us a flash of drama, as he does so finely in the passage on the Black Death :

. . . . John Stot's wife died
 A Tuesday, when John Stot was gone
 To work three hours. The children cried
 And pulled her gown. The eldest one
 Scolded and husht them. " Look," said she,
 " The pretty spot my finger's on.
 'Tis like a gilly flower. And see
 Here's another ! " Then she stared
 And stiffened, and lookt fixedly ;
 And tho' they throng'd her knees she glared
 Up at the rafters ; and the spot
 Glow'd on another armpit bared.
 Then all her troubles were forgot,
 And there was left one out of five
 To wait, but not to see, John Stot.

Or he can sum up, in a few splendid lines, the attitude of his people throughout an age, as, for example, when he writes of Hodge in the great days of early exploration :

He pastures on the common grass
 Week in and out ; he cannot stand
 To see the questing carvels pass
 Before the wind, a glory of white
 Upon the gray sea's emptiness ;
 Or watch them top the edge of light
 And be no more than a wandering name
 Heard in the day and lost at night.
 To him the West wind brought no fame
 Of Greenland or still Labrador,

When Cabot home to Bristol came
 And the old world knew one world more ;
 His heart beat not to hear the horn
 Shrill from the East the open door.

And, finally, he can change his note entirely, and can dispose of innumerable historical figures and events in a few shrewd and biting lines. Here is a typical passage in this vein :

They changed a dullard for a rogue
 When a fourth George reign'd in his stead ;
 Who made adultery the vogue
 At Court, and wail'd his griefs aloud
 When his wife swell'd the catalogue
 Of them who seeded what he plow'd.
 After him raced the rout of shame,
 The lewd, the fond, the empty-proud—
 Alvanley, Yarmouth, Jersey's dame,
 The Beau, the Poodle, in carouse,
 While England sicken'd at the game ;
 And all the wit of Holland House,
 All Bowood's talk and Woburn's treasure,
 Spent not the value of a louse
 On goaded men's content or pleasure.

But a consideration of this last passage, and of those immediately surrounding it, brings us to a point that must be made, namely, that while Hewlett did magnificently, he did not entirely succeed in fusing all his matter into poetry and avoiding rhymed history. It was not to be expected. In the last two or three books, which cover the last hundred and fifty years, the historical matter tends to overwhelm the poet ; he handles it to our admiration ; the wit, the lightning judgments, the force and grim humour, are astonishing ; but we cannot help feeling that the song has flagged and the music has been transformed into a series of blows on an anvil. Fortunately, the Envoy, that moving and generous vision of New Domesday, recaptures the song, and we come to the end in a maze of swift music and bright speech, our hearts warming to the man who made it all. From the very first line—" I sing the Man, I sing the Plow "—to the very last—" God speed the plow ! The tale is told."—the poem is a magnificently sustained piece of writing, masculine in style, close in grain, yet passionate and moving, keeping a close hold upon its great theme and yet so brimmed with soft and lovely images of the countryside and the life there that the poet is often in danger of defeating his purpose by making us feel that Hodge's is the most rather than the least enviable lot ; it is the creation, the long but happy labour, of a generous thinker, a strong personality, a fine craftsman ; it is the work, downright, full-blooded, proffered without stint, of a man, and men should honour it.

In the Envoy to the *Song of the Plow* there is much that brings back to our remembrance (as we smile somewhat wryly) the generous emotions,

the hopeful spirit, that we knew in the early days of the War. In Hewlett's other long poem, *The Village Wife's Lament*, which was published two years afterwards, in 1918, the change in mood is very noticeable ; it is the fourth year of the War and we have gone from the major into the minor key. The poem itself is much shorter than the *Song of the Plow*, much less ambitious, and, I think, taking into account its more limited aim, not so successful ; but nevertheless it has a curious interest and appeal of its own, and is indeed, in many respects, unique. It is partly a narrative poem and partly an elegy, and gives us the story of a young country-woman, widowed in the War, who describes very simply her early life and courtship, her marriage and subsequent happiness, and finally the loss of both her husband and child ; a stark and desolate piece. Hewlett himself said that the poem was dramatic and that he could not be supposed answerable for all that it expressed ; but it is quite clear that, in writing the poem, he had two objects in view. In the first place, he wished to make it dramatic and so far satisfying as a poem ; and in the second, he also wished to make it the vehicle of a number of ideas that he held very strongly at the time and that were to find expression in other places, notably in his essays. Thus, through the agency of his village wife, he wished to show us the simple dignity of the type to which she belonged (and particularly its loyalty and purity in sexual matters, upon which he was always insistent), the purely chivalrous attitude of the English peasantry, who knew nothing of world politics, when they offered themselves as soldiers in the early days of the War, and above all the pacific and Quaker-like attitude of mind that he himself came to adopt about the time the poem was written, an attitude that is well expressed in the naïve and poignant cries of the stricken girl :

O what is this you've done to me,
Or what have I done,
That bare should be our fair roof-tree,
And I all alone ?

Yet all this is a great deal to expect of one poem, and it is not surprising that Hewlett did not quite succeed in accomplishing everything he set out to do ; there is some loss, and that, I think, chiefly on the dramatic side, for the village wife too often fades for a space into a symbolic figure expressing general ideas rather than personal grief and bewilderment. The loss would have been much greater had not Hewlett, with rare austerity, foresworn the richer devices of his craft and chosen the simplest form and the barest language he could find. Indeed, he staked everything upon the moving appeal, the naïveté and poignancy, of the figure he presents to us, and did not hesitate to give us such things as this :

For we were knit, no doubt of it,
I as well as he ;
I peered in glass, my eyes were lit
After he lookt at me.

I knew not why my heart was glad,
 Or why it leapt, but so 'tis,
 The sharpest, sweetest pang I've had
 Was when he took notice.

The rough ballad measure in which the poem is written, with its jerkiness and awkwardness, and its heavy internal rhymes :

Or shockhead boy, aburst with joy,
 Or gawky, ill-at-ease,
 All hot and coy, a hobbledehoy
 With laces round his knees—

and so on, has no charm of its own, but actually the apparent faults, the monotony, the angularity, the repetition, really give the poem its poignancy ; it is either a cry, heartfelt, terrible, or it is nothing ; and the reader who cannot find beauty in it (there are certainly few " beauties " in it) but discovers that it is distasteful to him, must be really influenced by a thorough distaste for the sight and sound of simple grief, of which this poem is perhaps the most adequate expression in our recent literature. That this stark and naked thing should have been written at all by an author who was commonly thought of as a lord of fine language and purple phrases, is, if nothing else, yet one more proof of his astonishing versatility.

Hewlett himself thought the essay a species of talk (it is a view that needs considerable modification), and certainly his own essays suggest talk, at once brilliant and sensible, familiar but pared down to the essentials. In them, the poet, the moralist, the critic, scholar and biographer, and the man of the world, all have room in which to play. He was too impatient to be a good critic, but nevertheless his essays on literary subjects are amazingly good, a kind of sketch-criticism, at once stimulating and provocative, and usually taking the form of a rapid but by no means superficial examination of literature from some particular angle. Thus, in an essay entitled *The Facts* in his last volume, after establishing it that in lyric poetry there is a sublimity discernible which depends for its power upon fact alone, upon plainness of statement and perfect clearness, he runs at top speed through the gardens, groves and thickets of our poetry and points out a flower there, a tree here, as he passes. But more frequent are the essays in which he examines a literary figure, it may be Bessy Moore, seen through her husband's diary, or Shelley and Mary (*The Children Who Ran Away*) as they are discovered in her *Life and Letters*, or Byron as he is in his correspondence with Lady Melbourne. Of the last-named, Hewlett remarked :

To anyone who knows what there has been to know about Byron, it is obvious that he was a coxcomb ; a young man without judgment, or morals, or truth, or conduct, or manners. There are things in these letters which prove him to have been a cad, others which show him to have been a blackguard. . . .

which passage is an excellent example of his manner, which is sharp, short and decided. He had thought about these things for years, and he had made up his mind, and so everywhere he spoke his mind, in a curt, clear-cut, very personal prose that has a salt flavour and a frosty sparkle in it, but he did it without having that desire to astonish which is so common among our younger men. However combative, sententious and sharp he might be, in his last days, he was, unlike so many of his best-known contemporaries, an author and not an irritant. He was, however, at times a little too tart, too much the elderly moralist, more anxious to condemn than to understand and apt to forget that the world as it stands is the work of the older and not the younger generation ; but at his very worst he was never sour and never far from humour, which had a habit of " breaking in " even in his gravest homilies. Apart from these literary papers, his essays may be said to be the prose commentary upon his poetry ; they handle the same themes but in a very different manner ; and as the same ideas run through them all, there is in consequence a certain amount of repetition. Hewlett contributed most of these papers to periodicals, and often they deal with more or less topical themes which he examined in the light of his own particular beliefs, so that while there is repetition, it is never exact repetition ; we cover the same ground, as it were, but are not taken the same walk. Essayists are, I fear, a little given to repeating themselves, and they are also given, even the best of them, to padding ; but in all Hewlett's three volumes, there is, I imagine, less padding, more solid matter to the page, than there is in any one book by any contemporary essayist. By suddenly turning journalist late in life, he quietly made for himself a little niche in miscellaneous prose literature that he will continue to occupy. As in his poetry, so in his later prose, he gave us his best, wrote from the heart, and made not only readers but friends. If we did not give him sufficient praise when he was alive, neglected him shamefully when he was doing his finest work, we can at least make amends now, and add to our own felicity, by taking his later books to our hearts. He would not have asked for anything better.

THACKERAY

By JOHN BAILEY

IT is said that Thackeray is not much read now. If that is so reasons for it are not far to seek. He is a Victorian of the Victorians, and he suffers from the present anti-Victorian reaction which is only beginning to pass away. If his scene is commonly late-Georgian, his temper and point of view—and in no novels is the novelist more omnipresent—belong to the period of the Prince Consort. But this is only one of many things which are against him to-day. Another is his subject. People do not read novels that are fifty years old unless they have a certain intelligence above the average and a turn for books which is far from universal. Most people as we know read nothing but newspapers and the books of the year. Such people delighted in Thackeray fifty years ago because his books were full of the fashionable world, the world of Mayfair, and the great country houses ; and in those days everybody who read novels either belonged to that world, or hoped to belong to it, or, at any rate, watched it with interest and admiration. Now not only has that world mostly passed away, but what remains of it no longer excites the same interest. The relation of the Victorian middle-class towards the great world was one, if not of love, at least of admiration and hope. Even when it could not hope it admired : buying, for instance, many illustrated books of the “ seats of the nobility and gentry ” into which it was never likely to enter. That attitude was often ridiculous and sometimes worse. So far as it has been exchanged by our more democratic age for an attitude of “ envy, hatred, malice and all uncharitableness,” it is not clear that we have much cause to look down upon our grandfathers. But, however that may be, Thackeray has lost that advantage : the only people who now read the novels of his day are not much interested in the vanities of the Victorian Mayfair. No novelist can keep what I may call his accidents. Scott has lost the advantage of the wave of romantic mediævalism which served him so well a hundred years ago : Dickens has lost the infamous Schools and Workhouses and Courts of Chancery which could excite people so long as they still existed but are now little more than the picturesque furniture of his stories. So Thackeray has lost most of the machinery of his novels. There are no Lord Steyenes now ; no rich clergymen, the curled darlings of drawing rooms ; no Bishops whom worldly mothers wish to catch for their daughters ; very few footmen and not many snobs. The splendours of the scene in Rotten Row which he described so well (though never better than Henry James described it long after in the opening chapter of *Lady Barbarina*) have passed away and are never likely to return. Though many of us remember them well, they are now almost as strange and meaningless to the younger generation as the books of knight errantry which were the accident on which Don

Quixote was built three hundred years ago. A novelist cannot live by historical interest alone ; and Thackeray can no more live by being the best historian of the fashionable manners of the early nineteenth century than Fielding can live by describing English society as it was at the beginning of the eighteenth century, or Jane Austen by describing it, or part of it, as it was at the end of that century. Novelists, like poets, live by eternals and essentials, not by accidents.

Another thing which is against Thackeray to-day is his constant digressions and repetitions. How very far he is, as far, almost, as Mr. Wells to-day, from keeping to that law of art which Jane Austen obeys so absolutely, though she probably never thought anything about it, Hamlet's law of keeping to the " necessary question of the play " and not indulging in irrelevancies whether of buffoonery or of edification. Jane Austen never writes a sentence that does not advance the action or develop the characters ; her every word is significant and what I may call eternal. She never delays or bores or irritates us with externalities, such as the politics of Mr. Wells and the sermons of Thackeray. Thackeray, it is true, had an excuse which Mr. Wells has not. He and Dickens produced their novels by the tiresome method of the serial. So much " copy " had to be ready by a certain day, with the result that if the story was not ready to go on something else had to take its place : and so in Dickens the plot is forgotten in comic descriptions of " low life " or simply set aside in order to tell one of those stories within a story which Cervantes wisely learnt from his critics to avoid in his Second Part : and in Thackeray you may either have a twentieth repetition of his sermon on the marriage market of Vanity Fair or you are taken to Paris or Rome or Baden, and are asked to accept descriptions of the life of those places instead of what you want, which is the history of Clive and Ethel, Barnes and Colonel Newcome. Perhaps the only one of these foreign escapes which comes off quite successfully is the Brussels and Waterloo episode in *Vanity Fair*. But if that, so far from being a failure, is a consummate triumph, it is because, while it brings in Napoleon and Wellington and the fate of the world, it brings them in only as a setting or a background for Becky and Jos and George and Amelia.

No doubt the serial habit was partly responsible for that failure which Flaubert charged on all the English novelists except Scott, and which is perhaps true of all of them except Richardson, whom he may have forgotten, and Jane Austen and the George Eliot of *Middlemarch*, neither of whom I suppose he knew. " Ils manquent de plan," he said : and so they do ; and so will most men who write their fragments month by month and never see a whole. Perhaps, too, the necessities of that trade led Thackeray to another bad habit which was certainly responsible for much of his loosely ordered, long-winded writing which is so often on the wrong side of the gulf which separates the easy from the free-and-easy. He took to dictating to his daughter, as Henry James took to dictating to a secretary ; and if in Thackeray's case the bad practice did not lead

to the intolerable distortions, involutions and obscurities of the final style of Henry James, it led in Thackeray as in James, and, as it always does lead, to much wearisome verbosity. Thackeray is never obscure and never artificial or pedantic, but he is often wordy and garrulous. His daughter used to report a fact of which I sometimes wondered whether she perceived the full significance. She was often her father's amanuensis : but she said that she remembered that he would from time to time turn her out of the room and take the pen himself ; and that one of these occasions was when he came to the death of Colonel Newcome. Here are the well-known sentences :—

At the usual evening hour the chapel bell began to toll, and Thomas Newcome's hands outside the bed feebly beat time. And just as the last bell struck, a peculiar sweet smile shone over his face, and he lifted up his head a little, and quickly said ' Adsum ! ' and fell back. It was the word we used at school, when names were called, and lo, he, whose heart was as that of a little child, had answered to his name, and stood in the presence of The Master.

Dictation does not think of these things : and if it did it could not find for their expression the beats and rests and pauses of this music, the fine curves and lines and balance of this sculptured form. Form, after all, is the salt which keeps literature alive. All art lives by applying fine design to sound material. Neither a book nor a house will last unless it has both. Your house may indeed stand a long time if it be made of good bricks though ill designed : and a formless book like Aristotle's *Ethics* may survive by the sheer value of the stuff out of which it has been made. But such a book is scarcely literature, nor such a house architecture. They serve a purpose, but it is not the purpose of art which includes but transcends utility. A novel, on the other hand, is art or nothing, and therefore cannot do without form. I have heard it said that Mr. Wells and Mr. Bennett deny this, and say that a novel is not a thing of definite form like an ode or a sonnet or even an essay, but is rather a kind of bag into which the writer may put anything and everything that he has seen and known. The answer to that is two-fold. There is no objection to the anything and everything, but it must be folded and packed ; and the bag must be a bag, which is a thing of a certain shape, not a hold-all which is a thing of none. Milton got his anything and everything into *Paradise Lost*. But *Paradise Lost* is as strictly a work of formal art as any sonnet or rondel. Thackeray has not left us any work possessing the unity and proportion of a fine design : no work of the beauty of the *Bride of Lammermoor* or *Persuasion* or *Middlemarch* or *Madame Bovary*. Not even *Vanity Fair* seems to me quite that, though the omnipresent genius of Becky brings it nearer to unity than anything else he ever wrote.

What, then, does Thackeray live by ? For I do not think I need discuss the question whether he lives. It is nearly eighty years since *Vanity Fair* was written, and good judges still discuss it as one of the books which

can put in an arguable claim to be the greatest of English novels. The author of a book of whom that can be said is certainly neither dead nor likely to die. Rather he is likely to be read more as the anti-Victorian reaction dies out and he comes to be judged as coolly as Fielding or Richardson. When that cool judgment comes what is it likely to consider the qualities which have kept him alive? Well, first, there can be no doubt the sheer brilliance of his satire. He is, it seems to me, by far the most brilliant satirist among our novelists, though not the finest or the pleasantest. That is Jane Austen, who never wastes words and never appears to lose her temper. But in range and sweep and power—in all the qualities which we associate with men rather than with women—she makes no pretence of approaching the creator of *Becky Sharp* and *Barnes Newcome*. Her note is the finest in the world if our ears are fine enough to catch it and listen. But to Thackeray we must listen: every reader was compelled to catch his tune from the first. Jane Austen's gift is the rarer and more classical, no doubt: and that is why she has been gaining ground, as the classics do, all through the hundred years of her literary life, and has, very likely, more gaining to do yet, while the more obvious, more contemporary and less classical geniuses of Dickens and Thackeray received full recognition almost at once. But none of this alters the fact that Thackeray carries guns which she did not carry. He cannot surpass her—no one can—in sincerity; but in strength he can and does; and in the brilliance and daring by which his strength makes itself felt. There is in our language perhaps only one social satirist who is as brilliant as Thackeray, and he has chiefly chosen to put his satire into the form of drama. Mr Bernard Shaw is much wittier than Thackeray, equally brilliant, and founds his satire on a criticism of life which is far more original and perhaps more stimulating. But then his very originality has its disadvantages. It is not so much concerned with human nature as with particular theories of social and political system. Those theories will either be adopted or rejected. But in either case they will become old-fashioned as both defeated heresies and established institutions always do. The defect of Mr. Shaw's satire is that it deals with matters of intellectual controversy rather than with life: and is not set in an atmosphere of true and universal human nature. There is no tenderness in his world and no simplicity: one may almost say no love and no death. So his satire tends to become a mere crackling of sticks in a useless fire: what Thackeray's might come near being if *Becky* and *Barnes* and *Beatrice* and *Major Pendennis* stood alone; what it and they are saved from by not standing alone: by being part of a world which includes, not only them and such as they, but *Dobbin* and the *Colonel* and *Henry Esmond* and the perpetual presence of Thackeray himself. And there is another advantage which Thackeray has over Mr. Shaw and over his own contemporary Dickens who certainly excelled him in sheer force of genius. He has much more kinship with his victims and therefore has more real understanding of them and is able to make them much more

human and probable. Mr. Shaw can shed brilliant and impartial contempt on all persons and parties in *John Bull's Other Island*. But he is intellectually detached from all alike ; they are targets of his wit, material for his intellect to work upon, objects outside himself with whom he never conceives himself to have any kinship. So Dickens will lash the Court of Chancery or the officials of the Poor Law, making them almost unbelievable monsters of stupidity and wickedness, with scarcely a hint of any human affinity between Bumble and himself. It is a perfectly legitimate method : the method of Juvenal and Carlyle : but it may be allowed to doubt whether the method of Horace and Chaucer and Shakespeare is not preferable, with its suggestion, not merely of " There but for the grace of God goes," but also of " There in spite of the grace of God has often gone "—the satirist himself.

" Yes, it is very like—it is certainly very like," Thackeray once said to an American lady, as he looked at a volume of *Pendennis*. " Like whom, Mr. Thackeray ? " " Oh, like me, to be sure ; it is very like me." " Surely not," objected the lady, " for *Pendennis* was so weak ! " " Ah, well, Mrs. Baxter," he replied, " your humble servant is not very strong." And he never pretended to be. The world never succeeded in locking him up in its cage, but he had spent a good deal of time there ; and it was because he knew all its ways from personal experience, and had felt its attractions, enjoyed its pleasures and, now and then, half accepted its philosophy, that he can both picture it and preach against it better than any man. His fashionable worldlings are no dummies or stage puppets made up of rhetoric and unreality as those of Dickens are ; they are intensely alive : and the reason is that there is a bit of himself in them all. *Beatrice Esmond* is himself, and so is *Major Pendennis*, and so, perhaps, is even *Barnes Newcome* ; and so most of all is *Ethel* ; for she shows both, the self which he indulged and hated, smiled at and fought and conquered, and the other one, its generous, tender and loving rival and conqueror. He had *Lady Kew* in him as well as the Colonel ; and that is the reason why they are both so alive. He could not have given us the world with that masterly finality of his if he had not been of it himself. " You belong to your belongings, my dear," says *Lady Kew* to *Ethel* in one of the best of the many brilliant and living dialogues in which she plays her part : and it is a true saying : and Thackeray belonged to his. Because he belonged to the world he could make its people come so alive that we who love life can never help enjoying them, even such devils as *Steyne* and such curs as *Barnes* ; and as for *Miss Crawley* and *Lady Kew* and the *Major* and, above all, the incomparable *Becky*, we owe them too much to remember their sins : they have extended the bounds of life for us, they have so drowned us in intellectual pleasure that we do more than enjoy them, we actually like them and incline to resent their defeats and misfortunes, however richly deserved.

And what a range and sweep his satire exhibits ! It is not just a few figures who come alive in his wonderful way. It is the whole of *Mayfair*

and Belgravia, a good deal of Fleet Street and the City, and now and then a watering place or a great country house. His business was the picture of selfishness as he saw it at work in the society of his time. It is, of course, in the heart and essence of it, a thing of all times and countries : and he never forgot that, though he gave it, and was right to give it, the clothes he himself saw it wearing, and partly wore himself, as he lunched with it, dined with it and listened to its talk, partly amused and partly indignant, wholly interested and observant. He may never have pried into so many secrets of the heart, or rather of the mind, as the creator of *The Egoist*. But that great figure, terrible as he is to those who have the habit of intellectual exercises and sometimes turn these exercises upon themselves, is yet too little but an intellect, or even too little but the medium and puppet of the intellect of his creator, to come entirely and convincingly alive to ordinary men. Like all Meredith's people he is too wilful and fantastic to seem quite human : with all the observation and knowledge that has gone to his making he still shows something of the descent from Peacock, whose delightfulness is almost wholly of wit and literature and very little of life and truth. The secrets Thackeray learnt as he sat in his confessional were simpler and less subtle. But the subtle are, after all, a very small minority of mankind : and there is room for an infinite variety even among the unsubtle sinners of *Vanity Fair*. And does not this confessor provide us with plenty of it ? What a varied world his is, even if we remember only those penitents, or impenitents, of whom he has most to tell us ! They are all denizens of the Fair : of the world worldly, of the body bodily, sometimes of the flesh fleshly : but in what different degrees and ways and fashions ! How they crowd upon us, so pleasantly full of life, so amusingly, horribly, even once or twice so disgustingly ! Take the single family of Crawley : old Sir Pitt, the primitive beast of the slime : and his sons whose superficial sophistication has only led the elder to the calling of the Scribes and Pharisees and the younger to that of the Publicans and Sinners. Take Steyne, the man of pleasure, and Osborne, the man of business : the domestic tyrant of Mayfair and his companion of Bloomsbury : in the one the polite insolence that comes by inheritance and in the other the vulgar insolence that comes by acquisition : the heart of which the hardness of pride and sensuality had turned every particle to stone, and the heart on which the hardness of money-getting had done as much and may appear to have done more because the stone was unpolished and of coarser grain. Old Osborne suggests Thackeray's gallery of men of business : the weak failures like old Sedley, the weak successes like Hobson Newcome ; the flattered and fluttering innocence of the Colonel, with his childish folly in prosperity, his childish simplicity in his fall ; and the creeping serpent Barnes, always with one eye on business, another on Belgravia, and both on himself. And yet how respectable Barnes is to himself and how plausible ! He must certainly have died believing himself to have been a public-spirited citizen, an honest merchant, an

English gentleman, and, above all, an injured husband ! And Thackeray's work is done so well that we can understand his believing in himself : cur as he is, his true and natural man is so well covered with clothes of the best Belgravian cut that it was natural he should see nothing but them when he looked in the looking glass. Even he, the meanest of Thackeray's creations, is not a mere type as his companions in Dickens tend to be. In fact, it is one of Thackeray's triumphs that he creates human beings and not mere misers or bullies or angels of unselfishness. Colonel Newcome is no faultless Cheeryble, as is shown by his foolish boastfulness about his wealth, his ugly vindictiveness in the affair of Barnes, and his uglier unfairness to Ethel. So Amelia is saved by her blind injustice to Dobbin, and Laura Pendennis, perhaps, by her coldness to Clive and Ethel. The worldlings need less saving. It is a hard confession to make, but the truth is that we find it easier to believe in Miss Crawley and Lady Kew than we do in Laura and Dobbin and Henry Esmond. It is these last, much more than the others, whose life and credibility suffer when they abound too much in their own sense. And yet after all the portraits have been painted, worldly mothers, hard men of business, hypocritical parsons, heartless rakes and cheats and gamblers, Thackeray will tell us that these are not the whole of Mayfair any more than the saints are all the Church. The satirist who keeps close to life and will not sell it for rhetoric knows that this world is no more one of devils than it is one of angels. And he knows that a man who lives in Mayfair and dines at his club may yet have a heart and even a conscience. " However much they like each other, men in the London world see their friends but seldom. The place is so vast that even next door is distant ; the calls of business, society, pleasure, so multifarious that mere friendship can get or give but an occasional shake of the hand in the hurried moments of passage. Men must live their lives ; and are perforce selfish, but not unfriendly. At a great need you know where to look for your friend, and he that he is secure of you. . . . Some folks say the world is heartless ; he who says so either prates commonplaces (the most likely and charitable suggestion) or is heartless himself, or is most singular and unfortunate in having made no friends."

This satirist is himself in the world and partly of it, and stands often in need of that " most likely and charitable suggestion." But he knows that he speaks for other apparent worldlings as well as for himself when he asks : " What is the dearest praise of all to a man ? his own—or that you should love those whom he loves ? I see Laura Pendennis ever constant and tender and pure ; ever ministering in her sacred office of kindness—bestowing love and followed by blessings. Which would I have, think you : that priceless crown hymeneal, or the glory of a Tenth Edition ? "

So he gets his varied world of saints and sinners into his picture. The sinners, it must be confessed, are more varied and more entertaining than the saints. But then they generally are. Did not Plato prove that

virtue was one and vice manifold ? Thackeray's virtuous folk are all of a family and rather closely related, while his rascals stretch from the most noble and potent Marquis of Steyne to the adventurer Barry Lyndon, and the convict Amory, from the sly and odious Morgan to his decently selfish and politely victorious master. The resemblance and the contrast between these two last moved Thackeray, generally so easy in his paces, to the swiftest and perhaps the most brilliant chapter he ever wrote. Is there anywhere else in fiction so masterly a picture of the ease and certainty with which the class which has always ruled asserts its ascendancy over the class which has always served ? The master and the servant are man to man : all respect and distance has disappeared ; and Morgan is not only much the younger and probably the richer, but is in his own house, from which he is expelling the Major, and is besides in possession of a very serious secret. All the cards seem to be in his favour as he cries, "Don't be putting on your 'aughty looks, sir, and comin' the aristocrat over me. That's all gammon with me. I'm an Englishman, I am, and as good as you." Yet not for one instant do we dream a doubt of the Major's victory : which follows with Napoleonic brilliance, decision and completeness.

Yet Morgan stands nearly alone. There is a great deal of talk about servants in Thackeray, but he seldom gets behind what the diner sees, the liveries of the footmen and the sombre dignity of the butler. When he guesses at their talk or their pleasures, his guesses, which may be right or wrong, come to us coloured by dining room glasses. His servants are always seen as their masters see or imagine them, not as they see and imagine themselves. If there is the hundredth part of a Sam Weller in his collection I cannot remember him. His self-restraint was probably wisdom. He had never lived below stairs, as one may say Dickens had, and all he could give of the life below stairs was its idleness, envy, snob-bishness and servility ; often real enough, no doubt, but not more real than its hearty good-fellowship, happiness and kindness, its faithful and unselfish loyalty and love. Had he ever guessed the truth, if it be a truth, of that grave saying which Matthew Arnold set down so often in his private meditations, and which I think must come from Pascal : "*le faible, que nous dédaignons, nous est d'ordinaire supérieur, la somme de vertu étant chez ceux qui obéissent (servantes, ouvriers, soldats, marins, etc.) plus grande que chez ceux qui commandent et jouissent*" ? Perhaps he had, perhaps he had not. And after seeing the rascally valets of Molière one wonders whether there is a meaning in the gender of Pascal's "*servantes*." Was it only the maids and not the men who seemed to him to share with soldiers and sailors and workmen the goodness which he found greater among those who obey than among those who command ? Anyhow, Thackeray's footmen and valets suffer like everything, or almost everything, else of his from being seen too much from the windows of some Club in Pall Mall. He could have given us Littimer, though there is a touch of the theatrical and even of the melodramatic in

Littimer which he would have disdained ; but he could not have given us Peggotty. Peggotty, true and loving, yes, and living, servant as she is, is more a woman than a servant ; Littimer, like Morgan, is much more a servant than a man.

It is in fact no small part of Thackeray's strength as an artist that, like Jane Austen, he perfectly knew his limitations and never tried to step out of them. She never thought of trying the "big bow-wow strain," and she laughed at the "historical romance illustrative of the House of Coburg." Rural and domestic as she is, she scarcely mentions a peasant, and none of her servants is more than a figure passing on a distant background. I have no doubt she felt that she did not know and could not guess what passed in their minds, and where she could not be sincere and true she would not go. If Dickens had had the same wisdom as she and Thackeray, what a burden of Lord Frederick Verisophts he would have saved his shoulders ! Thackeray scarcely ever stepped out of his contemporary Mayfair—even the beloved Rose and Ring is Mayfair in Fairyland—except to go back to the eighteenth century, which he knew almost as well as his own. Some people, himself included, it seems, have thought that his masterpiece was one of these historical restorations. But I confess that that seems to me a mistake. Beautiful as *Esmond* is, does it not partake a little of the nature of a *tour de force*, which is never the most perfect sort of art ? And the final marriage of Esmond to the woman who had been as his own mother all through the book and was the actual mother of Beatrix, at whose feet he had worshipped through so many chapters ; does not that strike as nearly a false note, the note of an error of taste, as anything in Thackeray ? With the people who, like Trollope, think that he showed more "power of mind" in *Barry Lyndon* than in anything else, I confess that I have no patience. The book no doubt displays astonishing verve in carrying its hero through innumerable adventures at home and abroad. But one never cares a farthing about the man himself ; he is a mere peg to hang the adventures on ; there is no intimacy in the book ; indeed, there is nothing in him to be intimate with. He is a mere worthless rascal of whom we know nothing but what he does and suffers, never what he is, for the truth is that he is in himself nothing at all. How ludicrous to pretend that this stage figure exhibits more power than our incomparable Becky of whom we know everything, and, at least until we put the book down and shake off the spell of intimacy and gratitude, almost love the greater part !

No ; there can, I think, be no doubt that Thackeray lives primarily by *Vanity Fair*, and, after that supreme triumph, by *The Newcomes* and *Pendennis*. And to my taste, at any rate, it seems clear that it is *The Newcomes* and not *Pendennis* which must come next after *Vanity Fair*. *Pendennis* has the incomparable Major, it is true ; but the Clavering family are very inferior to the Newcomes, as inferior as Lady Rockminster to Lady Kew, and almost as inferior as Blanche to Ethel. And if Clive hangs fire even more than most heroes, if his eternal painting is a bore

and poor little Rosey only an excellently sketched negative quantity, neither of them ever appears for long except in the company of the Colonel or Ethel or the Campaigner, all, assuredly, in their very different ways, most potent givers of life. Did anybody ever, by the way, half so well as Thackeray, get alive that usually most lifeless of creatures, the reigning beauty of Society? Have Beatrix Esmond and Ethel Newcome any rivals anywhere, in the convincing truth of their beauty and charm and unquestioned and unquestionable sovereignty?

I must give my last word to another claim which Thackeray will always have on the attention of posterity. It is one which does not appeal to all the world, but to those to whom it appeals it is one of the strongest and most enduring of all. No one ever wrote purer or more beautiful English. The serial habit to which I have alluded, and the practice of dictating, often spoilt his style, no doubt; all the more because they were combined with a temperamental laziness which was in him from the first, and with a clubman's tendency to be easy-going and a journalist's temptation to acquiesce in the second-rate. But when he chose to take the pains to produce it, he had at his command an English whose liquid ease and gracious music not Addison nor Cowper nor Lamb himself could overpass. He seldom wrote really badly. His English is never stilted or clumsy or vulgar or obscure; and it seldom misses of that union of the contemporary and the traditional, the past and the present, which is, perhaps, the most essential quality of style. An author who has nothing of the past in him is a parvenu: one who has nothing of the present is a pedant and a prig. Thackeray escapes both reproaches. He has scarcely a page which does not owe something to the eighteenth century, and something which it is at no pains to conceal. He has none, at least in his contemporary novels, which does not contain thoughts and facts and especially turns of phrase, which no author of the eighteenth century could have given us. Like all great writers, he knows that he belongs to a great tradition and is not afraid to show that he has all his ancestors in his blood. But they are not allowed to overwhelm him. In the end and after all he is not the eighteenth century but the nineteenth, not his ancestors, but himself.

The defect of his writing is of a piece with all his other defects. The faults of the parvenu and the pedant he easily escapes, but he does not escape the faults of the gentleman, nor even altogether the faults of the man about town. As the man about town in him almost always prevents him from believing in, and therefore from creating, anything great; as the gentleman makes him construct his stories with such a gentlemanly casualness that people in them die and come to life again, and Barnes Newcome is middle-aged and bald while his brothers and sisters are still little boys and girls in the nursery whose bread and butter has to be cut for them; so clubbishness and gentility combine to make his writing too often loose, garrulous and longwinded, sown with old stories and obvious philosophies. All his books would have gained by liberal pruning; some

perhaps would have lost nothing if they had lost 30 per cent. of their seven or eight hundred pages. Nothing does Thackeray so much harm to-day as that flowing verbosity of his as of a man who is sitting at his club with the afternoon or evening before him and an audience who don't want to go home and have no other means of escape. In our present crowded hours we do not so often have afternoons or evenings before us, and are compelled to find ways of escape from novelists of our own or earlier days who threaten us with a thousand pages. And the result is that Jane Austen has this, if there were no other, immense advantage over Thackeray.

But when all the faults have been admitted, what fine things remain ! Is the wrong word ever put into the mouth of Becky Sharp or Barnes Newcome or Major Pendennis ? Do Beatrix or Ethel ever utter a sentence that belongs to anybody else ? Colonel Lambert we know is Thackeray himself. But he is a Thackeray of art and imagination. No one can suppose that the real Thackeray always talked with that quiet ease and humour and felicity of phrase. What fine and pure English they all talk, his best creations ! And yet with what differences ! The English of Pendennis is not that of Warrington, nor is the Major's the same as Lady Kew's, nor is the difference between the talk of Beatrix and the talk of Ethel merely one of century. And when he comes to the front of the stage himself, as he loves to do and does too often ; when a page or pages are given to his meditations and moralisings, cynicisms and tendernesses, what wonderful bits of English we get, not indeed always, but much more than now and then ! A wise critic likes to give his author the last word. Let me play the part of the wise critic, at least to that extent, and leave any readers I may have with Thackeray's words in their ears instead of my own. I complained of sermons ; and there are certainly far too many in Thackeray ; but yet I will end with three bits of sermons. For I have no dislike of sermons myself, and these seem to me so good that it is not easy at first to realise how much of its power the sermon in them owes to things without which the best thoughts and feelings are quickly dispersed in forgetful vacancy ; to the art of writing, that is ; to the choice of the right words and their fit and musical ordering. The first incidentally illustrates a gift, in which Thackeray certainly has no rival, that of playing with a word or two of some foreign language and making them exactly fit into the English harmony and become a natural part of it, and not, as so often with others, a pedantic and unassimilated excrescence. The passage is well enough known but will bear repetition :

Sure, love *vincit omnia* ; is immeasurably above all ambition, more precious than wealth, more noble than name. He knows not life who knows not that ; he hath not felt the highest faculty of the soul who hath not enjoyed it. In the name of my wife I write the completion of hope and the summit of happiness. To have such a love is the one blessing, in comparison of which all earthly joy is of no value ; and to think of her, is to praise God.

So much for love. I venture no comment except (after a passing regret at the affectation of "hath"), to ask how many passages of English prose

can face better than this such an analysis of lengths and weights and pauses as that to which Mr. Saintsbury has devoted a long and very interesting volume ; and, one other question, how many passages that go so near the mood of the Bible are so free of imitation of its rhythm ? And now for death, the death of " one who reposes after a long feast where no love has been ; " whose life has been " fourscore years of lonely vanity." It is the funeral of Lady Kew. " Let us take off our hats," says Thackeray, " to that procession too as it passes, admiring the different lots awarded to the children of men and the various usages to which Heaven puts its creatures." For in this passage the satirist has his place beside the preacher. " Leave we yonder velvet-palled box spangled with fantastic heraldry, and containing within the aged slough and envelope of a soul gone to render its account. Look rather at the living audience standing round the shell—the deep grief on Barnes Newcome's fine countenance ; the sadness depicted in the face of the Most Noble the Marquis of Farintosh ; the sympathy of her Ladyship's medical man (who came in the third mourning carriage) ; better than these, the awe, and reverence, and emotion exhibited in the kind face of one of the witnesses of this scene, as he listens to those words which the priest rehearses over our dead. What magnificent words ! What a burning faith ; what a glorious triumph ; what an heroic life, death, hope, they record ! They are read over all of us alike : as the sun shines on just and unjust. We have all of us heard them, and I have fancied, for my part, that they fell and smote like the sods on the coffin."

" They *fell* and *smote* like the *sods* on the *coffin* ! " If we have any awe in us at all, any consciousness of mortality, the words set us into a mood in which literary criticism seems impertinent trifling. But my present business is precisely with literary criticism, and I must be allowed to assume that the reader has paused a moment to let that mood have its working before I venture to break in again upon him. Then, if not till then, I cannot but ask him to notice with what consummate art those heavy monosyllables—*fell* and *smote* and *sods*—and those echoing assonances *smote* and *sods* and *coffin*—are piled one upon another till they seem to have in them all the sound and all the silence of a funeral, the hanging silence that is felt as we feel no other, the unnatural weight of the sounds that beat slowly, minute by minute, the steps of the mourners, the single voice of the priest, and the wide-spaced tolling of the bell. Landor said that all good criticism was, at least in its foundation, verbal. And though it is a much greater thing to feel the effect of a work of art than to guess or know how it was produced, yet it is interesting to observe such verbal details as these, and as the similar use of the same vowel—*box*, *slough*, *envelope*, *soul*, *account*—to strike the funeral note in the first sentence. One may note too the quickened pace of the satirical passage which follows : the irregular or unusual commas after " awe " and " reverence " which give that sense of waiting of which people of quick or delicate perception are so conscious at funerals : and, on the

other side, the one flaw perhaps of the whole, the obscurity of "within the aged slough" which might have been so easily and harmlessly remedied by adding "it" after "within."

I said I would give three bits of sermons. But why, after all, should they all three be sermons? Why should not the satirist, and not the preacher, have the last word to himself? And why should he not exhibit his brilliance and swiftness and life by the lips of the swiftest, most brilliant and most living of all his creations? This time, too, I will keep my promise and make no comment: so that it shall be Thackeray and his wonderful Becky who get the last word, and leave the reader, I hope, open-eyed with astonishment at the quantity of life and character and movement that can be got into a small number of words if only they be the right ones and rightly put together.

"Here, my dear, I was interrupted last night by a dreadful thumping at my door: and who do you think it was? Sir Pitt Crawley in his night-cap and dressing-gown, such a figure! As I shrank away from such a visitor, he came forward and seized my candle. 'No candles after eleven o'clock, Miss Becky,' said he. 'Go to bed in the dark, you pretty little hussey!' (that is what he called me) 'and unless you wish me to come for the candle every night, mind and be in bed at eleven.' And with this he and Mr. Horrocks the butler went off laughing. You may be sure I shall not encourage any more of their visits. They let loose two immense blood-hounds at night which all last night were yelling and howling at the moon. 'I call the dog Gorer,' said Sir Pitt; 'he's killed a man, that dog has, and is master of a bull, and the mother I used to call Flora: for now I call her Aroarer, for she's too old to bite. Haw, haw!'"

MR. JOHN GALSWORTHY

By EDWARD SHANKS

WHEN Matthew Arnold said that Literature was a criticism of life, he made a statement which has been very freely misunderstood and which has, therefore, been perhaps rather more mischievous than otherwise. But he might have been looking forward to an age of transition, which in his time was almost upon the world, of which indeed he was one of the harbingers, and the effect of which, upon literature, has been, in a way, to justify the common misunderstanding of his dictum. He might, that is to say, have foreseen the advent of such authors as Mr. John Galsworthy.

Mr. Galsworthy, whether in the theatre or in the novel, is nothing if not a definite and practical critic of the institutions of modern life. He is, as we shall see, something more than this ; but he is this in the first place. Almost everywhere throughout his work two types are strongly contrasted. We have on the one hand the upholder of established institutions, who generally belongs to the "Haves," and on the other the rebel or the vagabond, who frequently belongs to the "Have-nots." Mr. Galsworthy appears to see life almost exclusively in these terms : these make up the framework of his world. And in this his work accurately reflects the epoch to which he properly belongs : the epoch when the Fabian Society was an almost unseen but much-felt power, when Mr. Granville Barker's heroes aspired to the sober ideal of useful work in municipal politics, when Mr. Wells's undergraduates sat round the fire and discussed the Problem of Sex.

Many problems have vexed the soul of Mr. Galsworthy. He is troubled by the fact that there is in reality one law for the rich and another for the poor ; and he has discussed the matter in *The Silver Box*. He is worried by those cohesions of caste which sometimes run counter to truth and justice ; and he has brought them out for an airing in *Loyalties*. The problem of the land is a grave one. English agriculture is in a bad way, and so is the population engaged in it : sometimes model landlords are the worst of all, because the very principles which make them exemplary lead them also to be narrow and tyrannous. Mr. Galsworthy goes into this in *The Freelanders*. Industrial unrest is a serious business. There are faults and obstinacies on both sides which, as is demonstrated in *Strife*, bring misery to innocent women and children. Then there is a whole series of discussions of the problem of marriage and divorce. Mr. Galsworthy is passionate in his repeated protests against the fact that a woman may continue to be regarded as the property of a man whom she has ceased to love. This situation provides the most poignant element in the best of all his books ; and his attitude towards it is summed up at the end of *The*

Forsyte Saga, where Young Jolyon and Irene prevent their son, Jon, from marrying Fleur, the daughter of the man whose property Irene was once held to be. Young Jolyon writes to his son :

I don't wish to write harshly of Soames Forsyte. I don't think harshly of him. I have long been sorry for him ; perhaps I was sorry even then. As the world judges she was in error, he within his rights. He loved her—in his way. *She was his property*. That is the view he holds of life—of human feelings and hearts—property. It's not his fault—so was he born. To me it is a view that has always been abhorrent—so was I born ! Knowing you as I do, I feel it cannot be otherwise than abhorrent to you.

This rises naturally enough out of the situation ; but it is something more than an element in the story. It is a demand, a propagandist demand, coming from the author himself, that something which has been should cease to be. This fact, if it were not apparent, might be proved by the frequent cropping up of the same situation, in various forms, throughout Mr. Galsworthy's works. In *The Dark Flower*, Mark Lennan, Olive Cramier and her husband repeat almost exactly the grouping of Philip Bosinney, Irene Forsyte and her husband, though here the *dénouement* comes by the death of the wife, not the lover. In *The Fugitive* Clare Dedmond runs away from a husband who does not appreciate the beauty of sunsets or music, but nevertheless appreciates her personal beauty only too well. Courtier, in *The Patrician*, pleads in similar terms the right to liberty of Audrey Noel, whose husband, from whom she is separated, will not divorce her, though he does not persecute her, and whose lover, Lord Miltoun, is prevented, by conscientious scruples, from taking her as his mistress. Only in *The Country House* does a suggestion appear that there is another and not so admirable type of woman who falls in love and marries and falls out of love and demands freedom. Mrs. Bellew is represented as doing equal harm, by her lightness, to her husband and her lover ; and the advocate of liberty in this case is made to look something of a fool.

I have laid stress on this theme, and Mr. Galsworthy's treatment of it, partly because it bulks so largely in his work as to seem almost an obsession, partly because, more than any of the other causes he has argued, it shows him as a deliberate and undisguised critic of modern institutions and of modern ways of thinking about them. He is definitely a man who wants certain things done, certain things changed ; and, under one aspect, his novels and plays are illustration of his arguments on these points. It used to be the fashion to raise an uproar against an imaginative artist who used his imagination for such a purpose. To me, I confess, it has never seemed that there was such a dearth of imaginative literature as to make criminal the diversion of a certain amount of power, which might have created a little more, into the service of a specific reform : only the artist himself can judge what is his duty in this respect. But it may be doubted whether any such choice ever presented itself to Mr. Galsworthy. His

propagandist strain is something native and ineradicable in him. It is one of the two motives from which he writes, and it is generally almost equal, sometimes, indeed, superior in strength to that which must, from the point of view of pure literature, be considered the better motive. For if we take the "criticism of life" at the false value which its somewhat clumsy phrasing has invited, then the proper motive of pure literature, a motive which is not lacking in Mr. Galsworthy's work, is the appreciation of life. That he does write from this motive is sufficiently proved by the remarkable fact that his upholders of established institutions, the very persons against whom, from his other motive, his lance is constantly directed, are generally the most artistically satisfying and often even personally the most attractive of his characters. To this fact I must later return : at present I leave it as convincing evidence that the artist, however intermixed with another personality, is alive enough in Mr. Galsworthy.

That other personality, however, does exist side by side with the artist and does hamper him. This is nowhere more visible than in the plays. Mr. Galsworthy has somewhere said that it may be that, whether from inexperience or from want of aptitude, he moves with a sort of cramped action on the stage. This is not obvious, to me at least. *The Silver Box*, *Justice*, *Loyalties*—to take three pieces at random—are excellent examples of dramatic carpentry, which successfully hold the attention of an audience : it is less with their execution than with the ideas expressed by them that it is possible to quarrel.

The Silver Box and *Justice* are probably the plays which have earned Mr. Galsworthy his reputation of being the most thoroughgoing realist among English writers ; and these pieces are undoubtedly influenced by the German realists, such as Arno Holz and Gerhart Hauptmann. Ibsen, in so far as he was a realist at all, was a realist of the middle classes ; and he always had a plot, told a story and dealt with exceptional people. The Germans, with *Vor Sonnenaufgang* and *Führmann Henschel*, took a header into the life of the masses. Moreover, it was their aim to illustrate the texture of ordinary life by means of typical examples. So Mr. Galsworthy in these two plays. In the first of them he takes an undistinguished police-court case and says in effect : Now let us see what really did happen. According to Mr. Galsworthy's report of his researches what really did happen was this. Jack Barthwick, the young and foolish son of a respectable Liberal member of Parliament, after a night out with a doubtful young woman, steals her purse in a fit of drunken spite and returns home incapable of using his latchkey. A drunken loiterer named Jones helps him in, and, after a drink or two, and after hearing Jack boast about how he has "scored off" his mistress, makes off with the purse and with a silver box to score *him* off—Jack having previously drunkenly invited him to "take anything you like." Now it so happens that Mrs. Jones is employed as a charwoman in the house of the Barthwicks, and suspicion falls on her of having stolen the box. A detective is sent to her lodging and finds it

there, and she is arrested. Jones confesses to the theft and gives himself up. Meanwhile, Jack's young woman has called at the house to reclaim her money, and thus her existence and the affair of the purse have become known to the scandalised senior Barthwick. The last scene is in the police-court ; and, thanks to the adroitness of Barthwick's solicitor, Jones gets one month's hard labour without the whole story being told. Thus it is shown that there is one law for the rich and respectable and another for the poor and suspect.

On all this there is one first comment to be made, that, the purse having been found on Jones and mentioned in court, it is unlikely that the magistrate would have altogether suppressed Jones's cry when Jack is in the witness-box, " You ask *'im* what made *'im* take the——" However, it might have happened. There is a similar hardship in *Justice*, where Falder's plea of the temptation under which he committed forgery is turned against him by the judge. This is another typical sample of life. Falder, who is anything but a real criminal by nature, is led into crime by weakness and circumstances, suffers in prison out of all proportion to his guilt, is unable to recover his place in the world, and finally leaves the world altogether by way of a high staircase, down which he throws himself.

These are typical examples of life, so Mr. Galsworthy would have us believe. But of course, they are not ; and of course, a Forsyte might say, they are the hard cases which make good law. These plays do call attention to certain possible abuses of our social system. They proclaim that in certain cases the rich have a legal advantage over the poor and that in certain cases our antiquated penology confirms in crime those who have entered that career only by an accident. But, because they exaggerate, they are not good art ; and, because they exaggerate, they are dangerous argument. When Mr. Galsworthy writes for the theatre, his humanitarian sentiment runs away with him. These plays do not present typical, everyday cases : therefore they are faulty as illustrations of political or sociological arguments. They do not show under an extreme strain human nature at its highest : therefore they are faulty as art. Jones and Falder are unhappy accidents : they cannot thoroughly engage our sympathies. Jones is neither the ordinary Jones who walks our streets, nor yet Macbeth. Falder, an insignificant person, is promoted to high suffering by chance, a chance which does not visit one person in ten thousand. But, knowing this, we cannot take much interest in him as a typical case ; and he, being what he is, cannot to any great extent arouse our sympathy with him for his own sake. Mr. Galsworthy falls, here, between two stools. We sympathise with Macbeth, we *appreciate* him, because he is a high expression of human nature under an extreme strain. We might sympathise with Falder if we could think he was Everyman. But he is not, and Mr. Galsworthy does not succeed in making us think that he is.

In all this there is some suggestion that Mr. Galsworthy plays with loaded dice, and I do not find in myself any anxiety to escape from making

that imputation. Whether one says "loaded dice" or "debating tricks," it comes to much the same thing; and I contend, quite simply, that in his plays Mr. Galsworthy does not tell the truth. Let us take the third of the pieces which I have named as examples of his really admirable stagecraft, the piece called *Loyalties*. This play filled a London theatre for some hundreds of performances; and as a person who voluntarily went to see it for a second time I can testify that it is an interesting and exciting play. But its intellectual structure is exceedingly flimsy. Ferdy de Levis, staying in a country house, has a thousand pounds in notes stolen from his bedroom. He, loyal to the traditions of his race, wants his money back. His host, Charles Winsor, loyal to the traditions of country houses, does not want a scandal in his own. Charles Winsor and his associates, loyal to the traditions of caste, cannot bear to believe that one of themselves has stolen the money from this damned Jew. The matter comes into Court in the form of an action for slander; and conclusive evidence is brought to the notice of Ronald Dancy's solicitor that Ronald Dancy, as de Levis believed, is the thief. The solicitor's personal sympathies are all with his client: but he has his loyalty to the traditions of his profession. The case is thrown up: a warrant is issued: Dancy shoots himself. This clockwork rabbit manœuvres about the nursery floor with delightful vivacity; but I submit the thing would not have happened thus in real life. At the beginning an experienced and influential member of the Winsor and Dancy set obtains certain evidence towards a conviction of Dancy's guilt; and though he might have attempted to hush the matter up, it is in the last degree unlikely that he would have attempted to burke it by the methods which General Canynge uses with Ferdy de Levis. General Canynge would, in my judgment, have said to Dancy: "Look here, any one of us is liable to go mad once in a while. Tell me honestly, did you do it? If so, give me the money and I'll get it back to de Levis somehow, and we can forget it." But what General Canynge does say in the play, after forming his suspicions and communicating it to Winsor, is recorded thus:

CANYNGE. [*With cold decision*] Young Dancy was an officer and is a gentleman; this insinuation is pure supposition, and you must not make it. Do you understand me?

DE LEVIS. My tongue is still mine, General, if my money isn't.

CANYNGE. [*Unmoved.*] Must not. You're a member of three Clubs, you want to be a member of a fourth. No one who makes such an insinuation against a fellow-guest in a country house, except on absolute proof, can do so without complete ostracism. Have we your word to say nothing?

DE LEVIS. Social blackmail? H'm!

CANYNGE. Not at all—simple warning. If you consider it necessary in your interests to start this scandal—no matter how, we shall consider it necessary in ours to dissociate ourselves completely from one who so recklessly disregards the unwritten code.

To be quite frank, I don't believe it. I believe that Mr. Galsworthy, touching this real problem of "loyalties," has made an unreal, though theatrically effective, debating case of it. Here though, as elsewhere, he is the friend of the under-dog. In this play his sympathies are with de Levis, the man robbed, and with Dancy, the man betrayed by his temperament and by the foolish loyalties of his friends. To be on the side of the under-dog is, with him, a real passion ; and had he had any gift of lyrical expression his work might have taken on another, a more poetical and ideal poise. But, as his one volume of verse shows, this gift has been denied to him : and his passion for the oppressed shows itself more often in special pleading than in lyrical outbursts.

The plays are almost all efforts of special pleading. They are arguments in favour of particular cases much more exclusively than are the novels. And, of course, special pleading in the theatre is a difficult thing to make effective. The restrained and realistic method employed by Mr. Galsworthy succeeds as a rule only in making him seem feebly well-meaning. One catches in most of his pieces an echo of Mr. Barthwick's pronouncement in *The Silver Box* : " If we are not able to do much for them we are bound to have the greatest sympathy with the poor." And tendentious works of which the upshot is like this do not greatly stir the blood. The fact seems to be that Mr. Galsworthy can only rarely use the better, the life-giving element in his talent on the stage. He is not clumsy, not deficient in craftsmanship, but when he enters the theatre he leaves an essential part of himself behind.

A critic who knew him only in the theatre might be pardoned for thinking him only a well-intentioned and mildly despairing humanitarian, for thinking that Mr. Max Beerbohm's amusing parody in the *Christmas Garland* covered all the ground. It will be remembered that Adrian Berridge says to his wife, during their breakfast of boiled eggs and toast, when she guiltily desires to throw breadcrumbs to the birds outside, " Jacynth, don't you remember that long talk we had last winter, after the annual meeting of the Feathered Friends' League, and how we agreed that these sporadic doles could do no real good—must even degrade the birds who received them—and that we had no right to meddle in what ought to be done by collective action of the State." Mr. Galsworthy has fallen many times under the suspicion of belonging to that bleakest and least attractive of all human types—the ascetic who is not a fanatic, the ascetic who leads that life through deficiency, not excess, of temperament. The judgment is correct in so far as he is sometimes an ascetic and never a fanatic. But he is not always an ascetic, and it is important to state what, so far as I know, has never yet been remarked, that few English authors have written so well and with so deep a gusto on the subject of food. There is, to be sure, often an ironic purpose, and an ironic flavour in his description of an elaborate menu. Swithin Forsyte, giving the last touches to his dinner party, says, " Adolf, the least touch of the West India when

you come to the ham." It is satirical, but the author's pen seems involuntarily to vibrate in sympathy. No ascetic, whether by excess or deficiency, could have imagined that speech. Then there is the tremendous dinner-party where were present Soames and Irene Forsyte, June Forsyte, and Philip Bosinney. None of them enjoyed their food ; but Mr. Galsworthy and his readers do. The dinner consisted of soup, " excellent, if a little thick," " a fine fresh sole from Dover," " cutlets pink-frilled about the legs," spring chicken and salad, asparagus, an apple charlotte, French olives and caviare, and German plums. At the end " Egyptian cigarettes were handed in a silver box," and " Turkish coffee followed in enamelled cups " ; and the brandy which Soames pressed Bosinney to take was " pale and old." Altogether an admirable meal for the hot, breathless evening on which it took place, and it seems a pity that so little of it was eaten by those for whom it was provided. Then there is the wine which Old Jolyon offers to Irene when he entertains her unexpectedly at dinner :

There, in the wine-cellar, was a hock worth at least two pounds a bottle, a Steinberg Cabinet, better than any Johannisberg that ever went down throat ; a wine of perfect bouquet, sweet as a nectarine—nectar indeed ! He got a bottle out, handling it like a baby, and holding it level to the light, to look. Enshrined in its coat of dust, that mellow-coloured, slender-necked bottle gave him deep pleasure. Three years to settle down again since the move from town—ought to be in prime condition ! Thirty-five years ago he had bought it—thank God he had kept his palate, and earned the right to drink it. She would appreciate this ; not a spice of acidity in a dozen. He wiped the bottle, drew the cork with his own hands, put his nose down, inhaled its perfume, and went back to the music-room.

Or there is Sylvanus Heythorp's last dinner in *The Stoic*, a masterpiece of luxury and tragedy. Old Heythorp, brought to the end at last after a magnificent and piratical career, determines to commit suicide by eating and drinking all that medical advice had pronounced to be most dangerous to him. The evening began with a hot bath in water impregnated with pine essence ; and it ended with death. All that went between, from the oysters which opened the meal to the brandy which gave the *coup de grâce*, was perfect of its kind. This was euthanasia such as Mr. Wells's future never imagined.

Now it will be observed that none of these exhibitions of gustatory expertise is gratuitously introduced : I do not suppose that Mr. Galsworthy will ever write a cookery-book or a handbook for gourmets. Every meal in his works (and there are unusually many) has its due place in a patent exposition of character and motive. And it may seem that in insisting on this point I am forcing on Mr. Galsworthy a grossness which is altogether my own. But I contend, in the first place, that, for whatever purpose he uses these remarkable collations, Mr. Galsworthy could not have invented them without himself taking a genuine delight in good food and drink, and, in the second place, that this emotion is symptomatic of

the element in his talent which enables him to write novels of the first rank. To return to a phrase I have used earlier in this essay—he *appreciates* life.

Three out of the four examples given above come from the dispersed and irregular work to which its author gives the title of *The Forsyte Saga*. In this title there is an element of an irony, which is not in Mr. Galsworthy's happiest vein, though he knows the objections to which it is open, and has defended it, but which is not worth disputing here. The title is not of great importance, though perhaps that given to the first section of the work, *The Man of Property*, might most suitably have described the whole. Property is in our community a magical word, a centre of all the fighting of modern civilisation. Mr. Galsworthy revolts against its implications ; Mr. Belloc holds that the instinct for it is something instinctive and rightly ineradicable in human nature. But Mr. Galsworthy is too good an artist not to realise the richness of life, of living power, which has, during thousands and thousands of years, built up his institution and still maintains it. The Forsytes are, for him, symbols of the property-holding class, and " the figure of Irene, never, as the reader may possibly have noticed, present, except through the senses of other characters, is a concretion of disturbing Beauty impinging on a possessive world."

The general character of Mr. Galsworthy's work in fiction might be exemplified from other books ; but this is, I think, immeasurably the best of all, his most weighty, and *a* most weighty, contribution to modern literature. It enjoys one considerable advantage over most of the others : there is in it no *raisonneur* on the side of liberty. It must be confessed that Courtier, in *The Patrician*, and Gregory Vigil in *The Country House* grow a little tedious with their well-intentioned harangues. But in the *Forsyte Saga* we have the Forsytes on the one side and Irene, unconscious, involuntary symbol of a whole element of life, on the other. Irene is indisputably Mr. Galsworthy's best " concretion " of that element in life which does not uphold established institutions, and will not submit to them. She is magic, she is beauty, she is love ; and, as her creator remarks, she is " never present except through the senses of other characters." Or, as M. André Chevrillon says in his admirable essay on Mr. Galsworthy, she and her lover remain in the wings while their shadows are projected on to the stage.

Bosinney's shadow, even so, is thin and a little unconvincing ; but Irene's shadow is a real creation. She is not merely the figment of a progressive humanitarian, a stick with which the reactionaries may be satisfactorily beaten. She is a form of life, an embodiment of that sexual attraction which utterly transcends sex : hers is, indeed, the modern counterpart of the face which launched a thousand ships, and it is capable of burning the perhaps not topless, but very respectable, and therefore much safer, towers which house all the members of the tribe of Forsyte. In her, for once,

Mr. Galsworthy succeeds in presenting a poetic, an almost mythical, embodiment of that spirit of liberty and beauty which elsewhere he has to show in harder, less sympathetic terms. Because he has here done this, the *Forsyte Saga* has a balance and completeness which no other of his books approaches.

Oddly enough, he never falls short in his presentation of the characters whom he attacks. With the timid, the respectable, the self-satisfied, he deals confidently and convincingly. It might even be said without unfairness that he lavishes on them more of the pains which proclaim than on the persons whose causes he manifestly champions. He has perhaps given to no portrait more careful and affectionate labour than he has bestowed on the portrait of Soames Forsyte. Of this figure he says, in a very important preface, which has already been quoted :

One has noticed that readers, as they wade on through the salt waters of the Saga, are inclined more and more to pity Soames, and to think that in doing so they are in revolt against the mood of the creator. Far from it ! He, too, pities Soames ; the tragedy of his life is the very simple, uncontrollable tragedy of being unloveable, without quite a thick enough skin to be thoroughly unconscious of the fact.

This is true, and because Mr. Galsworthy creates, as all true artists do, beyond his consciousness of what he has done, it is equally true of the Soames of *The Man of Property* and the Soames of *To Let*. But between *The Man of Property*, first published in 1906, and *To Let*, first published in 1920, there has been some sort of a change in the mind which first imagined Soames. That figure sprang potentially complete out of Mr. Galsworthy's mind, no one can say that there is any inconsistency between the first Soames and the last. But Mr. Galsworthy's intellect and judgment have undergone a natural change during the intervening fourteen years. The wheel has come full circle, which, in a work of art, is a desirable thing to happen ; and now Mr. Galsworthy's love of Soames, always inevitable (for it is a law that the creator must sooner or later love his creations), is to the fullest extent apparent instead of being concealed. *The Forsyte Saga* leaves Irene in the possession of relatively satisfactory memories ; but Soames's life has been to the end a life of almost unrelieved tragedy. Mr. Galsworthy chasteneth whom he loveth ; and this is a mark of the truly imaginative artist.

The balance of this work is very nearly triangular. In Irene we have the apex of the triangle, the struggle of liberty against the fetters imposed on it. At one side of the base sits Soames, the tragic protagonist of established institutions, and at the other, Swithin, the comic relief. (I must own to finding both Old and Young Jolyon a trifle too liable to sentimentality to rank on the same plane with the persons I have named.) And Swithin Forsyte is an interesting piece of invention. In a story which Mr. Galsworthy, for excellent reasons, has not thought fit to bind up with the

rest (but it can be found in the volume called *Villa Rubein*), we find him as a young man making love to, almost marrying, an Hungarian young girl of wandering temperament and revolutionary connections. When he first appears in the canon we learn that :

Swithin had indeed an impatience of simplicity, a love of ormolu, which had always stamped him amongst his associates as a man of great, if somewhat luxurious taste ; and out of the knowledge that no one could possibly enter his rooms without perceiving him to be a man of wealth, he had derived a solid and prolonged happiness such as perhaps no other circumstance in life had afforded him.

Since his retirement from house agency, a profession deplorable in his estimation, especially as to its auctioneering department, he had abandoned himself to naturally aristocratic tastes.

The perfect luxury of his latter days had embedded him like a fly in sugar ; and his mind, where very little took place from morning till night, was the junction of two curiously opposite emotions, a lingering and sturdy satisfaction that he had made his own way and his own fortune, and a sense that a man of his distinction should never have been allowed to soil his mind with work.

Swithin is, whether Mr. Galsworthy means him to be or not, the justification of the old way of life. How he enjoys himself ! He has his well-furnished rooms, his nearly perfect servant, his horses, his dinner-parties ; when he dies, dazedly contemplating the bubbles in a forbidden glass of champagne, who ever died more happily ? He is one of the best three of Mr. Galsworthy's creations ; and, like Mr. Galsworthy's loving care in the description of meals, he illustrated what is here most necessary to be illustrated.

The quality shown in the affectionate, appreciative characterisation of Swithin is precisely that which informs the whole chronicle of the Forsytes and makes it not only Mr. Galsworthy's best novel but also one of the very few good and typical novels of our time. The one volume edition contains a genealogical table which dismays the intending reader, and is practically useless to him who has read. It may be interesting on occasion to refer to it and confirm one's recollection of the precise relationship between Young Nicholas and Giles Hayman, characters who cut no great figure in the story ; but perhaps the impression which the whole work gives of a large and various family, flourishing and alive as a group, is more valuable than the power to pin down these details.

Mr. Galsworthy succeeds in giving this impression, succeeds in making his family live and flourish over a period of some thirty-five years, just because here his appreciation of life as it is triumphs over his desire to alter things, passes into the contemplative ecstasy which is the true source of creative art. In almost all his other works, even the novels, the ghost of Mr. Barthwick sooner or later passes across the scene, muttering without conviction that " If we are not able to do much for them we are bound to have the greatest sympathy with the poor." This sentence is an almost

perfect summary of *The Island Pharisees*, where the reader flags on through some hundreds of pages, not surprised that Dick Shelton, with his vague, undirected humanitarianism, should be unable to hold his Antonia, but very much surprised that he should want to hold her. It echoes even in *The Country House*, to me easily the second of Mr. Galsworthy's novels: though Gregory Vigil is disappointed in his championship of Helen Bellew, it is not clear that any satire on his ineffectual idealism is intended. In *The Dark Flower* this note is absent; but *The Dark Flower* is, for other reasons, an unsatisfactory book. Here the ghost which crosses the scene is that of Irene; and she crosses twice, first as Anna Stormer, then as Olive Cramier, perhaps even a third time, as a ghost of what Irene might have been if her conflict with the accepted had begun at a much earlier age, under the name of Nell Dromore. This narrative contains excellent scenes and beautiful passages; and if it were a series of preliminary sketches for Irene instead of having been written some seven years after *The Man of Property*, it would be interesting. But Mark Lennan, the hero, is a failure, a stick.

Mr. Galsworthy's heroes are generally failures when he lets them get into the middle of the stage. Apparently he is a fair-minded man who has by an intellectual decision adopted the humanitarian and progressive side; and, as fair-minded men often do, he has studied, and states, the case of his antagonists with more curiosity and gusto than he gives to his own. Hence it is his Philistines and reactionaries, like Swithin Forsyte and George Pendyce, his ducks who are lame because of their own unlovely temperaments, like Soames Forsyte, his practical pests of society, like the unscrupulous old robber, Sylvanus Heythorp, who dominate his work and give it its salt and its vigour. But these characters are, after all, more frequent in modern life and often more interesting than the humanitarians and progressives. Mr. Galsworthy has to his credit a gallery of them, coolly observed and described with exquisite precision. Luckily in one case he found the exact balance which enabled him to get the very best out of his talent. In writing the separate parts of *The Forsyte Saga*, he pursued the development of the struggle between the forces symbolised by Soames and the forces symbolised by Irene long enough for his talent to grow mellow. And the more he loved Soames the nearer he came to an understanding of that unhappy figure, the better did the balance become. The essence of such a struggle is that our sympathies should be engaged on both sides; and by the time that he has reached about the thousandth page the reader feels that he has attained the state of knowledge in which either judgment is suspended or else he must assume towards these puppets the prerogative of judgment which with real persons is God's alone. To have brought an invented situation to such a point is no mean feat. By the way, Mr. Galsworthy has set down much valuable and vivacious social observation and satire—enough to give enduring life to his book. But he has done more than this. The struggle he thus describes is an eternal

struggle ; and his interest in it, in its eternal aspect, has overcome his interest in its merely temporal details. This book at least fulfils the conditions of great art : the persons in it are recognisable human beings, true to the requirements of time and place, but they are also symbols of forces which will continue in battle until human nature has evolved into some form which we should not be able to recognise at all.

*Woodcut**G. Seebohm*

THE TOWNSMAN AND THE COUNTRY

By ARTHUR McDOWALL

TOWN and country were once very gentle enemies. You may see the relation imaged in some seventeenth-century drawing of a city, neatly engirdled by its walls, which a river laps outside or enters on permission, while meadows and tree-clumps stray off into a vague distance ; and the reality lives still in old German or Italian towns, delightfully embattled, punctuated with little towers and mossy gates, through which the country waggons still creak laboriously. Each region, the outer and the inner, is trimly marked and defined. It was not so much the country that the town was afraid of as of other men and other cities ; and yet the country went on to the unknown, with its rude, uncertain people ; and how snugly the townsman might live among his kind, walled in from those uncertainties ! In the foreground, however, it was a pleasant intimate relation. Vineyards crept up to the walls, the noises of sheep and cattle passed over them, the innumerable country scents were wafted in, so that the man of the town must have been half a countryman through what was received by his senses.

In fact, it was an equilibrium, or something as near that as men may achieve ; the only sure balance in the matter being that the country should really have the upper hand, while the cities remain islands of exception. Nowadays we look out on a changed landscape. Cities have conquered all along the line—and the line is a vanishing one. The walls went long ago, and the city, being an active organism, threw out fringes and tentacles, its rows of little villas. It is so assured, and even surfeited, of conquest that it can take the country back on terms, in suburbs and garden cities. The suburban being is invented by the urban, and as a variant of the species he certainly deserves remark because of his very peculiar consciousness.

It reflects, in miniature, the whole long struggle. I am not thinking of the Londoners who have turned as an afterthought to the now demarcated lines of Chiswick or Hampstead, but rather of those who grew up in some such places ; and in their minds, if they are sensitive to the look and air of things, this war of town and country prints lingering traces which will prick at times, like old aches and scars in memory. There was the green wayside lane, now utterly lost to view ; it has been straightened and asphalted, and, planted with two identical rows of little houses, is derisively called an avenue. The stray wood into which one scrambled through the hedge, finding a child's paradise, would also one day be fenced and padlocked, policed by a guardian uniformed after the County Council's image of a gamekeeper : the same but not the same. Can even the stranger see without a twinge how roads and trams and houses have closed on the small red-tiled farm with its hayrick and pigsties—wherever

a haystack stands the country endures with it—or how some ample Georgian house, with stone pomegranates at the four corners of the roof, has been docked of its manorial leisure?

But the conflict of external things is only half the battle. In the mind of the native of the suburbs there is waged, invisibly, another. The leaves and flowers and clear air, the unbuilt country beyond, are the savour of his existence; and yet he flutters like a moth to the lights and warmth of the city. He leans to the first, and would be lost without the other. Of this internecine conflict he is hardly aware, pleasing himself rather with a sense that he has the best of both worlds. Yet he knows, feeling it in his bones and having it, indeed, constantly rubbed into him, that this “best” is not the essence of either; what he has got is just his queer, bivalvular experience. His fate is to be divided and unrooted; and to the last he will be a stranger to the other two races of men, hugging the secret of his origin very closely lest it put him to an open shame.

The townsman, now as ever, is relatively shameless; yet while he must always disdain the suburbans and feel some pity for the countryman he cannot have exactly the pride he used to have in the days when cities were stamped with the marks of race and mind. His triumph has been too indiscriminate, and he is one of a multitude without feature. And so, besides the yearnings for the country which he feels when the leaves bud, there are stirrings, not exactly of shame in him, but of remorse or repentance. But they are only a dawn of misgivings. Call him unhappy, unnatural, degenerate, as we may, when he goes into the country he still feels himself the better man. He has the surest passport, an invincible belief in himself, and though this may seem a strange thing to come of mixing with hosts of other people, the assurance undoubtedly does come. His ignorance of country things is rather a joke than a torment to him. The countryman, growing where character has the soil to root and spread, ought to feel the same confidence when he visits cities, but usually he does not. The impact on him is too brisk and aggressive. In his heart of hearts he may despise the incomprehensible turmoil and crowding, and show an impassive front to it all, but there are times when this is a mask worn with some pain; he is shaken inwardly by bewilderments, and perhaps dazzled with a secret longing. It is the sting of the matter that the townsman should feel superior in the country while the countryman feels inferior in the town. He is lost there, while the visitor's recoil from the country generally means, at most, that he is bored. There may be a superiority in feeling bored, but there is none in feeling lost; and so the townsman succeeds on the easier tests of mind.

No doubt this sense of aplomb is rather spurious, being only the comparative adroitness of a person accustomed to move and bustle faster when placed against a background of slow-moving time. But living where things happen about five times as fast, the townsman has acquired a certain aptness for seizing occasions. So, although he occasionally looks a fool in the country, he will seldom feel one, and his complacency is not

quite unreal. There are a host of things which he does not know ; he may not tell campion from comfrey, and is said never to see a hare. His faculty for picking out the obvious things is a lasting wonder to the countryman ; but this very habit is a sign of the naïve good faith in him, and he is quick enough to find what he needs for the refreshment of his soul.

And as the country is but a passing show to him, that is enough. Suppose, however, that the play became a reality—that he were obliged to make a home out of his temporary lodging ? This happened in an odd case within my knowledge, which shows how the spirit of the town will persist and claim its own. A small boy was sent down from East London on a country holiday to a fairly distant and secluded spot. Either because he was unaccountably forgotten and had no means of getting back, or because he was beguiled by the mistress of the cottage, who had a wheedling tongue and some claims to be regarded as the “ wise woman ” of the neighbourhood, he remained where he was. There were no other children in the cottage, and no doubt the woman was delighted to have this one dropped from the clouds ; his earnings were also acceptable. The boy went to work with her husband ; who, if he felt compunction sometimes, like the good fellow he was, at what might become of this “ proper little scholar, who never used a vain word,” acquiesced in the will of his ruling partner and took the situation as it came. The boy’s father wrote once, twice perhaps ; but the adopters were in a strong position because neither of them could read. A year or two years passed, and the boy grew indistinguishably like a country boy, for just that whitey-brown look stole over him which Mr. Hardy describes as the countryman’s protective earth-colouring. By day, as a carter’s lad, he was with the horses on the road or about the farm ; in the evening he went back to the cottage in the woods. He learned all the ways of the country, but they did not win his heart. His inmost thoughts were elsewhere, perhaps not with his home, which appears to have been shadowy, but in the city from which he came. He saved a little, secretly, and inquired in a discreet quarter about the fare to London. At last, one day, he went ; and some time after a message reached the country that he was driving a van in London streets, no doubt with pride, and undoubtedly with profit of what he had learned in bondage.

The country had “ made ” him—at least, it is pleasant to think so—but by its training rather than its charms. They had an even fainter effect on another town child, who, at the plastic age of six, migrated with his mother to the same part of the country. He thrived in health and looks, but, so far as the love of Nature went, nothing happened. After two or three years he was still unmoved by that enchantment ; his dearest pleasure was to go where he could see a train (trams being unavailable), and his thoughts were in a busy suburb. There he was duly restored, and the country dropped away from him like water. He had been in an exceptionally fair region, but one of its charms was that solitary wildness which no town-mind, not even a child’s, can endure for very long unless it has resources of imagination.

That a grown person in this free and populous country should be marooned so is less thinkable. And yet, like the faint reflex of an ancient terror, that fear of being stranded will revive in the man of the town when he is in country places, balancing the longing for a country life which he feels when pent in a city. It is more than a question of the look of things ; his personality seems to ebb away. So Johnson, greatest of townsmen, longed to escape from the storm-bound Hebrides and "go on with life." He is afraid that this continuousness, on which all hangs, will be broken. Any chance, such as a disappointing place or uncomfortable lodging, may produce the wish to be off ; but what naturally produces it more than anything else is, as with Johnson, the constraint of weather. Still, it is on the finest summer day that you are quite as likely to hear the remark which betrays the town-mind more infallibly than any other : " But isn't it very dull here in winter ? " The visitor doesn't know or has blissfully forgotten that the month in which he is generally obliged to take his country holiday is the only one when Nature might be called dull—muffled, somnolent August. But he certainly ignores, as people will, the fascination of the wintry country—a fascination by no means limited to what you may do there. The chief of it lies just in the country itself, for then, and then only, can you see what it is made of : all the shapes and moulding of the earth, and the trees in their lovely articulation, drawn clear against the grey, or warmed through and through with gold as the sun slopes towards the level. And how much of drowsier charm, if you seek that, there is in the last hour before sunset on a quiet afternoon, when the white owl flutters like a huge ghostly moth from copse to hedgerow. But the townsman will think of it all as a long, cold indistinctness, and so he should not risk himself in the fields on a dun day, or he will find Nature as grey as the streets, and much more lifeless : to penetrate the greyness you must live inside it.

For all his thoughts of Nature are of its radiant surprises—of the radiance which is like an impact and yet bathes you in a sense of timeless leisure. The magic is in that sudden transformation. Streets, houses and the multitude of people whom you have jostled through dim months fold up like a screen, and beyond them is a space so wide as to be almost emptiness. Even in summer's fields the first bodily sensation is of a pleasant kind of nudity, as though some of one's clothes had been removed—and probably they have been. The air washes round, bringing a slight, agreeable chilliness, and in spring a tremor out of the untamed cold ; the feeling which Keats put into a line, and a word even, with " the daisies on the aguish hills." There it all is, the bare exposure and the twinge in it, but also the perennial joy, the small flowers and the high grounds to walk on.

To come out of the town then is to recover one's senses. In the silence, where no noise is, there is room for sounds, and you hear the voice of the wind and the calls of birds, though you may not know the names of all the singers. And the delight of the eye is a stolen pleasure no longer. You may rejoice in architectural lines in Paris, in the shadows which

make London a thing of mist and air, or even in the flaming colour of its night-signs ; but these are hazards and diversions. A sheet of yellow gorse or a bank of primroses gives you freedom. And freest of all the senses is smell, which is more an enemy than a friend in towns, and always a prisoner on suspicion there. The scent of plants and flowers is as good as the sight of them, and it appears to convey something in their being which knowledge does not reach ; in the dark, at least, their disembodied fragrance is like the message of a spirit. To be dropped at some wayside station in the dusk or night, and then by rare luck to find yourself in a place where the bog-myrtle grows, is to be taken suddenly into another order of existence, and to get the essence of the country more vividly and pungently than by any vision.

These impressions, of course, are more than mere sensations ; they are imaginative, felt " along the heart " as well as in the blood, and may strike so deep as to compel you to believe that the townsman, in such moments, relishes the country more than the native ever can. Each sight, sound or perfume is, if only to dim consciousness, the symbol of some inherent beauty and freshness in a world that appeared stale, ugly or vexatious. They may be called romantic impressions, but it is just as obvious that they are natural. What the stranger sees is too good, in a way, to be true ; and he himself feels that these delightful things are barely real. They are the more delightful for that, since much of his actual life is bondage. But these fancies may become divinations of real things, be shareable : and, in fact, some of the best things about the country have been said by poets from the town. No doubt the best thing will always be said by a poet, whoever he may be ; it did not matter to Keats, with his rich perceptions, that he was a cockney or suburban. But all men at a moment of " more than usual sensibility " have the stuff of a poet in them ; and Nature will lay its spell even on an unwilling poet. Consider Herrick, for example. There are his numbers, stained with the mellow gold of the West and at times simple as the flowers ; the magic of that country, the breath of Nature itself, passed into them. And at the same time there are just those Arcadian touches in his picture, and that mingled relish of frugality and lusciousness, which might suggest a visitor. So Herrick was, at heart, and the Hesperian region was " this dull Devonshire." He remained a townsman who yearned back to London and, when the chance came, snatched it almost indecently.

From the dull confines of the drooping West,
To see the day spring from the fragrant East,
Ravish'd in spirit I come, nay, more, I fly
To thee, blest place of my nativity.

As for our own contemporaries, we should probably find that some of those whose poems have the most intimate breath of the country do not live there, or are, at most, its adopted children. But for a confession here and there, who would guess that the slums of the super-tramp had lain behind Mr. Davies's lyrics of Nature ? A time came, as he has described in a

simple and charming little book, when he found himself living among trees and birds and large-eyed cows instead of crowded human beings. It released the spirit of Nature which he had secretly desired in the city. "This is the hour I dreamed of," as he says, recalling such a longing :

When I, hemmed in by wrecks of men,
Thought of some lonely cottage then,
Full of sweet books ; and miles of sea,
With passing ships, in front of me,
And having, on the other hand,
A flowery, green, bird-singing land.

Undoubtedly there are souls in the town whose destiny, if they can find it, is to belong to Nature ; or to say it more prosaically, there are hosts of people constrained by circumstance to a town life who yearn to live in the country, which they would do in many cases (for the dream can also be an illusion) with the happiness expected. But this means, as a rule, that they are countrymen already by origin or tastes, and implies something which counts for a good deal—that they know what they will find there. And perhaps most Englishmen are naturally rural. Although the sudden impressions of fields and trees are a joy reserved for the town-dweller, half the pleasure in them, at least, is that they are quick recognitions ; rediscoveries of a life and beauty, and of actual places, even, which have been loved already. The person who is utterly without a tinge of this experience—and unless you go into the abysses of the city it is hard to find him—is the limiting case, the townsman by brute fact and necessity. The townsman by grace is he who knows something of those country joys but holds the best of them inferior to the charms of cities. Charles Lamb was a town-lover of this sort, by faith ; he rivals Johnson in his ardour, and almost outbids him in expressing it. Were the charms of Nature ever more subtly inverted, more cruelly used as weapons against her, than in this letter, which makes her seem more *artificial* than London ?

Your sun, and moon, and skies, and hills, and lakes affect me no more, or scarcely come to me in more venerable characters, than as a gilded room with tapestry and tapers, where I might live with handsome visible objects. I consider the clouds above me but as a roof beautifully painted, but unable to satisfy the mind ; and at last, like the pictures of the apartment of a connoisseur, unable to afford him any longer a pleasure. So fading upon me from disuse have been the beauties of nature, as they have been confinedly called ; so ever fresh, and green, and warm are all the inventions of men, and the assemblies of men, in this great city.

Nature and the country seem unreal to him, and not with an enchantment which is better than reality, but a deplorable thinness which is worse. Lamb was writing to Wordsworth, and the imp of mischief in him revelled in the occasion. He put the case gloriously high.

But then, too, there was the bare truth—the impossibility of being dull in Fleet Street, with the sun glinting on houses and stones, even on the mud and dirt, the crowd, the print-shops and the stalls, "parsons

cheapening books," and gentlemen telling lies behind the counters. There was the vitality of London. "The wonder of these sights impels me into night-walks about her crowded streets, and I often shed tears in the motley Strand from fullness of joy at so much life." Sensitive and yet robust at heart, he clung to that fullness. And for the want of it, when his life was growing dark and Nature offered only a blank without support, he could utter this groan from Enfield, which is perhaps as grim a thing as has ever been said about the country: "I dread the prospect of summer . . . no need of his assistance to make the country dull."

But he liked each oasis of quiet, if not the all-enveloping quietness in which you can hear yourself live; and so no one except Marvell has written about a garden more insinuatingly. It was a place to dream in, full of touches of the past, with human as well as natural graces. He leaves out the flowers, and we see the dials, terraces and fruit walls; and the sunny window-seat where he read old books. Certainly Pan or Silvanus had spoken to him in effigy within the firry wilderness at Blakesware, but he felt no urging to track them to their lairs beyond the wall. He is for Nature where she is very close to Man: in the quiet, green assimilated country which you could walk into from London; by the farmhouses that held welcoming faces, the New River meadows where he used to bathe, and pleasant Hertfordshire as the limit of it all. It was the safe, genial radius of one whose adventures were among books and in the company of men.

Up to a point, all Englishmen resemble Lamb—the love of gardens being the most amiable of national passions. It is an impulse that will quicken the town-dwellers as if it were a pollen dropped into them from the country out of sight. And so in grey streets, on the merest patch behind a railing, they will rear hollyhocks and tulips; not with much sense of the appropriate, but with a touching bias for the inspiriting and gay. The townsman who has seen Nature first, and by precarious glimpses, in a garden will carry this garden-mirror with him to the end. He cannot help it, because it is what the lines of English country suggest. The small intimate landscapes in which old cottages have grown like plants, the abundant greenness, the tracery of hedges and lordliness of parks have all ministered to that fancy and inspired the only æsthetic feeling which no Englishman is without. But to call his love of Nature, or the country, simply æsthetic would be none the less absurd. It comes out of a sympathy with all things that live and grow—grow and flourish unthinkingly and yet fortunately, on the whole, as his race does. It delights in the nimbleness and subtlety of animals, and, renewing a time when Man was more or less as they, and shared the same exciting hazards, draws him instinctively to sport. So, if the garden is one pole of Nature, the wilderness is the other, and being rooted in the primitive part of Man it has also captured the imaginative.

The townsman, according as one or the other of these poles attracts him, veers between absolute quiescence and intense activity, Whichever

it is, Nature has the look of a playground, a place one enjoys but is not called upon to work in, like the Victorian garden which yielded cut flowers abundantly, but where you would not see the owner toiling with a fork. The visitor, of course, will work hard enough after his manner, taking any exercise to restore his physique and nerves, and this is natural and an act of veneration for Nature ; yet often, in doing so, he seems to be inventing contrivances for keeping Nature at bay. Hence the value and dis-value of games. Golf is not really played because " it takes you into such beautiful places." The specious argument has its truth, certainly, and the beauty of the places will be a supervening charm ; but then it also is true that the game often lays a possessive hand on them, just as grouse moors will keep an enticing mountain under ward. Lawn tennis, no doubt, is pleasantest on a country lawn, but it is strange that when people have found the country at last they should turn their back on it, and live for the small rectangle of a court. Cricket is rural and expansive by comparison—native to the green where it was born, with tall elms and a passing road for boundaries. But of all invaders the fisherman is he who sinks most into the country. His mute and localised figure disturbs no calm and is, in fact, a sentinel of quietude.

Pascal, who was a man of towns, must have had his own race in mind when he made his famous remark that all the troubles of humanity came from their being unable to remain quiet—quiet in a room. The invaders are so active. The men who work with their hands are the most apt to enjoy contemplation and a pipe, and even they have been corrupted by *chars-à-bancs* almost beyond hope. But the town-dwellers can scarcely be reproved when the complaint from which they are suffering is just that their bodies, if not their minds, have been forcibly kept quiet in rooms. Why should doing seem a deadly thing when there is something pleasant and sane to do ? It is evidently good and pleasant here. You will not see a stream of deep tawny pools without wishing to bathe in it, or a line of grassy downs without desiring to walk on them, or a mountain of the reasonable native size without an impulse to climb it—and in a true climber the fiercer, foreign varieties will rouse much keener sensations. He, no doubt, should be able to combine the tensest action with brief, intense contemplation at the top.

But does he always achieve that ? And do many people, when they are at the pitch of well-being, health-intoxicated by the country, get far beyond a complacent reverie ? Perhaps there is no reason why they should. They have got a rare joy, long missed, which is simply the delight of existing. And Nature is, so far, inside them. But the outer Nature to which they owe all this may remain a vague accompaniment. When dreams hover or thoughts begin to come they lead back, as a rule, to quite different interests and feelings. After the first thrill has subsided the effect of the country on a visitor is like that of music on a sensitive, untrained mind : it excites reveries on almost anything but itself. The man from the town returns to his hopes and memories, makes projects, finds an inspiration or recovers

one. This habit, too, should be noted and not blamed : it may not be good manners towards Nature, but it is a very practical way of treating her as the friend of Man. The results need not be too alien, though it is disquieting to think how many schemes of business or politics must have been hatched incongruously in a green shade on holidays. Resolves or creative thoughts may presumably be born, mystical contemplations possess the mind, and at worst, before the visible but unfamiliar reality, there is the freedom of romance.

But this reality may become real even to the stranger when he feels not only that the country is there, all round him and delightful, but that the particular things in it—birds, trees, and the shape of the hills—matter very much. He has come out to find himself again, but also to do it among these things, and he must lose himself to them if he is to do it satisfyingly. And this is what he really craves for, in spite of all those vain repetitions of his other life in country-houses and hotels which are, in truth, his last defences. He does not want more people. He has them already in the city ; and the society of men and women is, apart from sheer necessities, the only reason why anyone should live there. But the compressed humanity, the multitudes who crowd unknown, also drive one out of it, creating at last the frame of mind in which even a sociable person may be heard to say that he would be lost if he did not spend a month in the year without seeing other people. Doubtless if you go straight from town pavements into a solitude of moor or mountain you may be lost at first in another way, finding yourself an unabsorbed atom in the vastness, with all human props obliterated. But short of that extreme the townsman always has in some degree to make, and survive, this passage.

Those who live in the country do not know this adventure of the mind : they are beyond its difficulties. They may think it absurd to be told that they live mainly in a world of things, for besides the raciness of character in the country the " things " themselves behave remarkably like persons. Plants and animals become known in the only way a living being can be known, in every mood and under all reflections. To watch these moods is pleasant, and they have somehow a reality not always visible in the moods of people. Close to the universal life, they are miniatures of all growth and spontaneity, and a process so remote from the watcher and yet so vitally part of him is absorbing to follow. The townsman, intercepting it at one moment, needs intuition to divine the others, as well as to see what is before his eyes. In fact, unless he has lived year in, year out, in the country he can hardly know what he is missing. But if he is at all sensitive to Nature he will guess something of the other links, and decide to have, one day, the whole of them.

CORRESPONDENCE

"TOM OF BEDLAM"

(To the Editor of THE LONDON MERCURY)

SIR,—The interesting letter of Mr. W. Clark Durant in your June issue prompts me to send you some comments on Poe's use of the lines from *A Tom-a-Bedlam Song* as his motto to *Hans Pfaal*. While the exact source of Griswold's text of that story is uncertain, it is known that Poe used the lines and cancelled them in his MS. of the tale from which the *Southern Literary Messenger* is printed. Hence he was not indebted to Griswold's edition of Disraeli, which first appeared with the imprint Philadelphia, 1844, though often reissued from the stereotype plates by different publishers. Indeed Poe was early familiar with Disraeli and borrowed much from him in his early compilation *Pinakidia* (1836). Before leaving the subject of the *Tom-a-Bedlam Song*, however, I should like to point out that Poe's fine late poem *Eldorado* (1849), almost certainly takes its encounter of a knight and a shadow, and probably the suggestion of its peculiar metre from the lines :

With a knight of ghosts and shadows
I summoned am to tourney
Ten leagues beyond
The wide world's end
Methinks it is no journey.

and Disraeli's comment that they "contain the seeds of exquisite romance." Poe probably took Disraeli's words as a challenge, and gave us the journey beyond the wide world's end ("over the mountains of the moon"), together with the knight who meets a shadow, but he changed the conception sufficiently to remove all doubts of his own essentially original mind's creative work on the poem, and gave a certain symbolic unity very different from that of his source.—Yours, etc.,

Columbia University, New York,

THOMAS OLLIVE MABBOTT

Department of English and Comparative Literature,
June 24th, 1923.

(Assistant in English).

[N.B.—The connection of the *Eldorado* poem has never been pointed out in print, to my knowledge. I have seen the Poe MS. and the 1844 Griswold edition mentioned—certain "authorities" are mixed up in regard to the latter—I have been meaning to publish my views on the *Tom-a-Bedlam Song* and *Eldorado* for some months.—T. O. M.]

RICHARD CRASHAW

(To the Editor of THE LONDON MERCURY)

SIR,—With reference to the information supplied by Mr. S. C. Roberts in your June issue, for which I am very grateful, I should be obliged if you would allow me to add, in justification of my enquiry, that the volume of Crashaw's *Poemata et Epigrammata* (1674) which he mentions has only just been presented to the University Library at Cambridge, in view of the attention which was called to its rarity.—Yours, etc.,

Thorpe, Epping, Essex.

L. C. MARTIN.

THE "ATLAS" NEWSPAPER

(To the Editor of THE LONDON MERCURY)

SIR,—I do not know whether any of your readers, English or American, could help me to find a file of this (London) weekly newspaper for 1829. The one in the British Museum is incomplete for this year, and I have been unable to ascertain the whereabouts of another. I should be extremely grateful for any assistance.—Yours, etc.,
21, Primrose Mansions, S.W. 11.

P. P. HOWE.

THE COLOUR OF THE ANTARCTIC

(To the Editor of THE LONDON MERCURY)

SIR,—The writer of the review of Mr. Cherry-Garrard's book, *The Worst Journey in the World*, in your columns, makes special reference to the author's statement that the Antarctic snow "seldom looks white, being on the contrary shaded with many colours but chiefly with cobalt or rose madder and all the gradations of lilac and mauve which mixture of those colours will produce"; and also to a further statement by the author that "a white day is so rare that I have recollections of going out from the hut or the tent and being impressed by the fact that the snow really looked white."

As the writer of the review states that he has always been suspicious of the "easy view" which the title of my own book, *The Great White South*, suggests to him, I trust you will permit me to state why I gave it that title, and also to supplement what I wrote in it with a few observations on Antarctic colouring.

I was offered by Captain Scott a berth on his staff as officer in charge of the photographic department of his expedition because previous to that time many years of experience, as an illustrator of foreign lands, had taken me twice round the world and into every conceivable climate from that of Alpine peaks to tropical jungles, in search of the beautiful and picturesque. I went to the Far South equipped for the study of colour effects by photography by means of Autochrome plates—of which the makers, Messrs. Lumière of Lyons, generously presented me with a supply for the purpose. Since 1910, in addition to having spent a year and a half in the Antarctic I have also been to within 800 miles of the *North Pole*, and have photographed there both in monochrome and colour. Perhaps, therefore, I am not unqualified to express myself about the scenic and colour aspects of the Polar Regions.

I found opportunities for using Autochrome plates, in such parts of the Antarctic continent as I visited, were so few that I reluctantly decided that time could be more profitably employed in getting monochrome effects by means of isochromatic plates. This was naturally a great disappointment to me, as I had hoped to make a comprehensive record of the Antarctic by colour photography.

But except for the brief period which preceded and which followed the disappearance of the sun, on no occasion was there sufficient colouring to be seen at Cape Evans to induce me to open a box of Autochrome plates. Indeed, so disappointed was I with the paucity of strong colour effects that on several occasions I expressed my disappointment to both Captain Scott and Dr. Wilson.

My travels have taught me that first impressions are exceedingly evanescent, and so throughout them I have made a practice of recording such impressions as quickly as possible after they were formed. My impressions of Antarctic colouring—as expressed on pages 30, 94, 114, 117, 119, 153, 194, 195, 197, etc., of *The Great White South*—were not written from recollections, but from records in my photographic notebooks, and they accurately express the feelings inspired at the time I wrote them.

There is no doubt that finer sky effects were to be seen at Hut Point than at Cape Evans—though the two points are only fifteen miles from each other—and many of Dr. Wilson's most striking sketches were first drawn and the colour notes made in that locality about the time of the disappearance of the sun—at which time I was at Cape Evans.

The colouring of both the Antarctic and Arctic is generally exceedingly delicate, and I know of but one artist who has consistently painted such scenes true to nature. He is a Norwegian, and the admirable restraint of his wonderful studies of Spitsbergen is more effective and convincing than the more highly-coloured work of other artists.

It would seem that my friend, Cherry-Garrard, whom I hold in the highest esteem for the unflinching part he took in an unparalleled adventure, must have allowed impressions which he formed during the lovely semi-twilight season that precedes and follows the long Polar night—or else which he formed during the Spring or the Autumn when the sun was low (for he speaks of shadows on the snow)—to predominate over the less remarkable and less attractive impressions that one forms on more frequent occasions. The Antarctic is no exception to other parts of the world in respect of the fact that the snow which falls there is white, and looks white. We all know that white light when decomposed is shown to be a combination of the primary colours. So the snow in the Antarctic, as elsewhere, often seems to change as it reflects the colour above it. It almost mirrors the afterglows, and it faithfully reproduces the glorious mother-o'-pearl and lilac hues which in clear weather follow the departure of the sun. And under a low midnight sun the snow may even appear to be tinted amber. But most of the days I spent in the Antarctic were either stormy or overcast, and on all lightly overcast days in the summer, when the sun was at its maximum altitude, the whiteness of the snow was almost blinding—and I might even eliminate the adverb, for, because of the intensity of the actinic rays at such times, the worst cases of snow blindness invariably occurred on those overcast days. On such days, on account of the whiteness of everything, it was necessary to use Wratten's K₃ colour screens for scenic photography, and my exposure-meter gave a very high reading. As overcast days predominate in the Far South, my impressions, as recorded in my memory and in my note books, were of a land of dazzling whiteness. That is why I gave my book the most appropriate title I could think of; and in it I have given Antarctic colouring the credit that is its due.

In drawing a comparison between the Antarctic snows and the desert, your reviewer disagrees with those who have described the latter as "monotonously white or yellow," for, as he very truly states, "it is sometimes pink, or blue or grey, and every undulation of its surface is a cupful of coloured light." I, too, know the desert—the deserts of Arizona, New Mexico, Egypt, Arabia and Mongolia, and I know that what he states is true—at early morning or in the evening, when the sun is shining, *but never at noon*. The glorious effects produced by shadow can only be observed when the sun is shining, and in the desert the sun must necessarily be low to cause the undulations to cast shadows. But those who have seen, as I have seen, the desert on an overcast day—such as one sometimes sees even in the desert in America—know that it may be accurately described as "monotonously yellow or white."

Travellers frequently go into raptures over the colouring of foreign countries, whilst quite overlooking the more familiar and even more beautiful colour effects to be seen at home. I have spent three years in Japan—about the colour of which country there has been probably more written than of any other land on earth. But with all its subtle beauty and floral festivals and vermilion gateways, I know that, compared with the glorious freshness of sweet England, Japan is a grey land. And having lived for years in California, I know that the much-vaunted sunsets of the Pacific are not to be compared with the matchless evening effects and afterglows so frequently seen in the British Isles. In America, I have heard the sunsets of Scotland talked of with almost bated breath.

How often it is that only the glamour of the *distant* land inspires!—Yours, etc.,
47, Oxford Mansion, W. 1.

H. G. PONTING.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES & NEWS

Correspondence from readers on all subjects of bibliographical interest is invited. Our Contributor will, to the best of his ability, answer all queries addressed to him.

NOTES ON SALES

NOT much in the way of bibliographical literature has reached me during the past month. So I propose to save what *has* come for notice next month, and to begin with a few brief notes on sales ; after which I shall devote most of my space to the booksellers' lists which I have so neglected of late.

The nineteen picked books from the late Lord Carysfort's library, referred to last month in these notes, were sold at Sotheby's on July 2nd, and realised the very large sum of £35,550. The Mazarin Bible reached £9,500 (not quite a record for this book) at which price it was bought by the Rosenbach Company. The Latin Bible, printed at Mainz in 1462 by Fust and Schoeffer, the first Bible to bear a date and the printer's name, went for £4,800 to the same buyers. Of the Caxtons, that to reach the highest price was *The Royal Book*, 1488, which was sold for £2,300 ; the *Dictes or Sayings of the Philosophres* went for nearly as much—£2,150. Dame Juliana Berners' *The Book of St. Albans*, 1486, was sold for £2,450 ; the *York Manual*, 1509, for £450 ; and Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, 1563, for £295. The Kilmarnock edition, 1786, of Burns, an uncut copy, made the record price of £1,600 ; and the very fine first folio of Shakespeare was bought by Messrs. Quaritch for £6,100. Altogether this was a most remarkable sale.

MESSRS. SOTHEBY also sold—on July 3rd and 4th—the library of Mr. Edward Huth, which was remarkable for its Shelley and Byron first editions. Among the former the following prices may be recorded here :—*Adonais*, 1821, £270 ; *An Address to the Irish People*, 1812, slightly imperfect, £160 ; and *A Proposal for Putting Reform to the Vote*, 1817, £220. The most notable of the Byron prices were as follows :—*The Curse of Minerva*, 1812, £450 ; *The Waltz*, 1813, £85 ; and *Poems on Various Occasions*, 1807, £160. The " Garrick Cup," a cup made of the wood of the walnut tree which Shakespeare planted at Stratford, and originally the property of David Garrick, fetched £350.

MESSRS. HODGSON'S sale on July 3rd was rendered noteworthy by the fact that among books from an old country-house library (identity not given) were two unrecorded copies of Shakespeare quartos, bound up with a fragmentary copy of the 1622 edition of *The Troublesome Reign of King John* (the source play of Shakespeare's *King John*). These two quartos were the fifth edition, 1612, of *Richard III.* and the sixth edition, 1613, of *Henry IV.*, Part I. Of each of these editions only ten copies were previously known to exist. The plays had been shockingly maltreated by a binder of about a hundred years ago, but the *Henry IV.* was in fair condition, and the volume sold for £600. There were other rare sixteenth and seventeenth century books in the collection.

ON July 13th Messrs Hodgson held a general sale, which included a number of books from the library of the late W. H. Hudson. These books, together with other property, were left by Mr. Hudson to the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, and were sold for that society's benefit. The result must have afforded protection to quite a large number of birds, for some very good prices were realized, the most notable being £71, which was paid for Hudson's own copy, apparently the first to be offered as a separate lot in the sale-room, of his three-volume novel, *Fan: The Story of a Young Girl's Life*. This was published in 1892 by Messrs. Chapman and Hall, as by "Henry Harford." It is amusing to note that Hudson presented this copy from his pseudonymous to his real self, and wrote in it the inscription "W. H. Hudson from H.H." There was also a large number of presentation copies to Hudson from other distinguished writers, including W. G. Henley, George Gissing, Mr. Cunninghame-Graham, Mr. Masfield, and Mr. Galsworthy. Another item in the same sale was a copy of Mr. George Moore's *Flowers of Passion*, 1878, which sold for £30.

ITEMS FROM THE BOOKSHOPS AND CATALOGUES

THE last list to be issued by Messrs. Pickering and Chatto, of 1, King Street, St. James', S.W. 1, is a sturdy little pamphlet of some two hundred and seventy pages, illustrated with a good many facsimiles of title-pages and the like, and containing the final portion of the *Addenda* to their recent series of catalogues. Rather out of the ordinary run of this firm's books are two Kipling items, one of them being the first edition of *Departmental Ditties* (1886), which is priced at £26. Books more typical of the kinds of literature in which Messrs. Pickering specialise are some of the old plays, such as Middleton's *The Phoenix*, 8vo, 1607, £60; Jasper Mayne's *Two Plaies*, quarto, 1658, £24; or Otway's *The Soldier's Fortune*, quarto, 1681, £6 6s. And there are, of course, many rare volumes of poetry, of which perhaps the most notable is the book which contained Milton's *Lycidas*, the *Obsequies to the Memorie of Mr. Edward King* (I omit the Latin title, for brevity's sake), quarto, 1638, a very rare volume for which £775 is asked. Somewhat less valuable are the two parts of Henry Vaughan's *Silex Scintillans*, 8vo, 1650, which are offered, bound together in contemporary calf, for £120. And to come down another step there are uncut copies of both volumes of Cowper's *Poems*, 1782 and 1785, 8vo, for £52. But all these things are rarities at which such penniless collectors as myself can only gaze with envy, and it is lucky for us that Messrs. Pickering also offer a great many cheaper books running right down to the humble half-crown volume which often provides as good and curious reading as the highest-priced rarity. Among the comparatively inexpensive books I notice a copy of Anthony Hammond's *New Miscellany of Original Poems . . . by the most eminent hands*, 8vo, 1720. These early eighteenth century poetical miscellanies are getting scarce nowadays, and £3 3s. is the price asked for this one. Pope's *Verses to the Lady Mary Wortley Montagu*, beginning:

In Beauty or Wit
No Mortal as yet
To question your Empire has dar'd;

first appeared in Hammond's Collection, which included a good many interesting things, among them the famous verses to Lady Katherine Hyde (afterwards the Duchess of Queensberry), *The Female Phaeton*, which are so often attributed to Prior, but were probably written by Simon Harcourt.

ANOTHER catalogue which contains some attractive poetical volumes of various classes is Messrs. Dobell's number 125, issued from their shop at 8, Bruton Street, W. 1. In this list there is, for instance, a copy of Hildebrand Jacob's *Works*, 8vo, 1735, for £1 12s.—a price which again shows the rising value of books of this period. Jacob was a fluent and very coarse versifier, whose chief title to fame is that he was the real author of *The Curious Maid*, an indelicate poem that is often fathered upon Prior. Some of Jacob's pieces were not devoid of merit, however. I like, in particular, this little epigram of his :—

Titus reads neither Prose, nor Rhime ;
He writes himself ; he has no time.

which shows that literary society has not changed much, in at least one respect, during the past two centuries. Another book of verse in this list is Lady Winchilsea's *Miscellany Poems*, 8vo, of 1713 (£2 10s.) and there is the 1668, 8vo edition of Dr. Robert Wild's *Iter Boreale* for £1 10s. Wild included in this volume one poem, *Alas ! Poor Scholar ! Whither wilt thou go ?* which has a most fascinating lilt :—

In a Melancholy Study,
None but myself,
Methought my Muse grew muddy ;
After seven years Reading,
And costly breeding,
I felt, but could find no pelf :
Into Learned Rags
I've rent my Plush and Satten,
And now am fit to beg
In *Hebrew, Greek and Latin* ;
Instead of *Aristotle*,
Would I had got a Patten.
Alas poor Scholar ! Whither wilt thou go ?

Cambridge now I must leave thee,
And follow Fate,
College hopes do deceive me ;
I oft expected
To have been elected,
But desert is reprobate.
Masters of Colleges
Have no common Graces,
And they that have Fellowships
Have but common Places,
And those that Scholars are
They must have handsome faces :
Alas poor Scholar ! Whither wilt thou go ?

There is much more of this poem, but perhaps two verses will do by way of illustration. Yet another amusing little book which I notice in this list is Dr. William Wilkie's *Fables*, 8vo, 1768 (7s. 6d.). Wilkie was the author of the *Epigoniad*, a now unread epic which earned for him the title of "The Scottish Homer." Nevertheless, his fables are quite lively reading. The bicentenary of the Scottish Homer's birth, by the way, went by last year without producing the faintest ghost of a celebration. I must conclude this paragraph by adding that the most important book in it, from the wealthy collector's point of view, is the second volume of the *Works* of

Ben Jonson, folio, 1641, the actual copy presented by its editor, Sir Kenelm Digby, to Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia. The price of this interesting book is £175.

MR. JAMES TREGASKIS'S most recent catalogue is number 872, issued from The Caxton Head, 66, Great Russell Street, W.C. 1. This is a miscellaneous list including many English books before 1640, books about books, and nice series of works by Thomas Fuller, James Shirley and George Wyther. Of the Wyther books the rarest is his first publication, *Prince Henries Obsequies*, a quarto issued in 1612. For his copy of this book Mr. Tregaskis asks £25. A first edition of Donne's *Letters to Several Persons of Honour*, 4to, 1651, is priced at £14. There are also a good many sixteenth century woodcut books scattered throughout this catalogue. I ought to add that Mr. Tregaskis's previous list (number 871) was devoted to Incunabula, fifteenth century woodcuts, and manuscripts of liturgical, historical and artistic interest.

MESSRS. ELKIN MATHEWS, LTD., of 4A, Cork Street, London, W. 1, have recently taken to dealing in old books, as well as continuing their publishing business. Their list number 2 has just reached me, and it contains some pleasant books, especially of my favourite eighteenth century, which will, I trust, give me a chance of working in a quotation or two (quotations are a great alleviation of the brain in hot weather) before this paragraph is ended. There is, for instance, for £2 2s., a copy of Gay's 1720 4to *Poems on Several Occasions*, which reminds me—not this time to quote—but to say that I hear a rumour that a collected edition of Gay's poetry is shortly to be published, and that it will contain several things not in the late John Underhill's edition. However, a quotation is dragged from me by the sight of the *Works* of Aaron Hill (four volumes, 8vo, 1753, 30s.), and it is this :—

THE JOURNEY.

As in a journey just begun,
We think the distance vast,
Yet while we travel gaily on,
Insensibly 'tis past ;
So in our youth we measure slow
Long views of promis'd breath :
Till like a shadow out we go
And vanish into death.

Is that not a delicate little poem ? The reader who cares for such things will find several more like it among the poems of Hill. Then there is Joseph Mitchell's *Poems on Several Occasions*, published in 1729, and two very fat 8vo volumes, which Messrs. Mathews offer for a guinea. Mitchell, the son of a Scottish stonemason, was born in 1684 and died in 1738. The general level of his poetry is not high, but there is one *Song* of his that has an unusual rhythm, and those of my readers who have the habit of making a note of such pretty trifles may care to know of it. It begins thus :—

Leave kindred and friends, sweet lady,
Leave kindred and friends for me,
Assur'd thy servant is steady
To Love, to Honour, and thee.
The gifts of Nature, and Fortune,
May fly by chance, as they came !
They are grounds the Destinies sport on,
But Virtue is ever the same.

For the two remaining stanzas I refer the curious to Mr. Mitchell's two volumes, which are handsome things to possess, even if one is not likely to read them through, from cover to cover, a great number of times. Messrs. Mathews' catalogue is divided into two parts, and in the second are to be found many modern first editions.

FIVE Roger Payne bindings are among the books offered by Messrs. Henry Young, of 12, South Castle Street, Liverpool, in their list number 493, at prices varying from £30 to £3 3s. Among other books in this list I notice a fine copy of the first Bible printed by A. Koberger, of Nuremberg, folio, 1475. This copy is that from the Hibbert and Powis collections, and its price is £120. For half that sum there is another famous example of the same press—the *Chronicon Nurembergense*, folio, 1493.

ALARGE heap of Catalogues, so far unmentioned in these notes, still lies upon my table. There are, for instance, such specialised lists as that of books relating to Bibliography (number 446) issued by Mr. Francis Edwards (83, High Street, Marylebone, W. 1), and Messrs. Suckling's catalogue (number 82) of engraved portraits, issued from 13, Garrick Street, Covent Garden, W.C. 2. There are also general lists like Messrs. Ellis's number 214 (including a large section of sporting books) from 29, New Bond Street, W. 1, and Mr. T. Thorp's number 103, which comes from his London shop at 93, St. Martin's Lane, W.C. 2. Then there are many provincial lists, of which I must mention a few. For example, Mr. J. Miles, of 34, Upperhead Row, Leeds, a bookseller who often has attractive things in his catalogues, in his latest one (number 226) offers for £18 Lord Cobham's own copy, handsomely bound, of a poem that was dedicated to him, Elkanah Settle's *Thalia Triumphans*, folio, 1715; and Messrs. Heffer, of 4, Petty Cury, Cambridge, offer a large collection of books on Folk-lore, Egyptology, and the Classics. And, finally, there are two lists from Newcastle-on-Tyne, Mr. R. D. Steedman's number 39 (17, Savile Row) and Mr. W. H. Robinson's number 8 (4-6, Nelson Street). Mr. Steedman's "plum," from my point of view, is a copy of Gray's *Odes* of 1747, of which the price is £12 10s.; and Mr. Robinson offers a number of books specially interesting to north-countrymen.

I. A. WILLIAMS

BOOK-PRODUCTION NOTES

LOVE-POEMS OF JOHN DONNE. The Nonesuch Press. 1923.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS. By ANDREW MARVELL, ESQ. The Nonesuch Press. 1923.

RELIGIO MEDICI. By SIR THOMAS BROWNE, Physician of Norwich. The Golden Cockerel Press, Waltham Saint Lawrence.

THE GARDEN OF CYRUS. By SIR THOMAS BROWNE. The Golden Cockerel Press, Waltham Saint Lawrence.

MONOTYPE. Vol. IX, No. 6. Philadelphia, U.S.A. 1923.

THE NONESUCH BOOKS

WE are told in the Prospectus that "The typography of all Nonesuch books is in the care of Mr. Francis Meynell." The actual printing of the books is done under his direction at various presses. The Nonesuch edition of Donne's *Love-Poems* was printed at the Oxford University Press; Marvell's *Miscellaneous Poems* comes from the Kynoch Press; and other volumes have been printed by yet other printers. That is one reason why the several volumes present such a charming diversity in every detail of their production, while owing to their only begetter their marked family likeness as well as the better part of their good looks. Both the Donne and the Marvell are printed on hand-made paper with a page rather larger than royal octavo. The paper of the Donne is French, with the smooth finish characteristic of fine French printing papers; that of the Marvell is of Italian make and bears the Nonesuch watermark; it is much rougher in texture. The Donne is printed in the "Fell" types, which give the book a certain contemporary flavour; but the seventeenth-century printer would have chosen a larger type for the extracts from Izaak Walton's *Life of Donne* which precede the text, and would have set these pages solid; the small leaded type used in the Nonesuch reprint is a trial to weak eyes. The text of the Poems is set solid in italics of "english" size. This type is beautiful to look at, but, like all italics, difficult to read by the unpractised modern eye. How much more readable is the fine large roman type used for the Contents pages! The Marvell is set in the 12-point "Garamond" of the Lanston Monotype Corporation, so used as to make a delightful and easily readable page.

THE GOLDEN COCKEREL PRESS

THE new edition of Sir Thomas Browne which is now issuing from the Golden Cockerel Press shows a marked advance in the quality of its production as compared with the early efforts of the Press, which I welcomed in these pages over two years ago. It is in crown quarto, printed in Caslon's 14-point "Old Face" on unbleached Arnold paper. The printing shows a study of Kelmscott Press and Doves Press ways in the solid, close-set lines, and in the "run-on" paragraphs, separated by a leaf ornament recalling Morris's "bugs." The volumes are bound, too, in the familiar blue-grey boards with linen backs. They show a sense of the dignity that can be achieved by plain roman type, thoughtfully used. Nevertheless, the pages are a little heavy and dull, which the Kelmscott and Doves pages never are. The dullness comes in part from the shape and size of the page and the long measure of the lines, which rather strain the eye: there are well over thirteen words on an average to the

line ; an average of about eleven words would make much easier reading. Then there are no head-lines : that makes the page look rather like a blank wall without coping or window or any other feature to give it colour and lightness. There is no editorial note to say what text has been used in the reprint : the spelling is not that of the seventeenth century, nor yet of the twentieth, so I will hazard a guess that an early nineteenth century edition has been used instead of Browne's own authentic text.

"GARAMOND" AND THE MONOTYPE

A RECENT number of *Monotype*, a Journal issued in Philadelphia by the Lanston Monotype Machine Company of America, is set in "a trial casting" of a new version of the type attributed to Claude Garamond. It has been designed by Mr. Frederick W. Goudy, the most active and adventurous of modern type-designers, and adds yet another to the three or four versions of this lately revived face. All of them have their own minor differences, some of which were pointed out by Mr. C. A. Barman in a letter published in the June number of *THE LONDON MERCURY*. They show how difficult it is to copy exactly any fount of type ; and it is perhaps well that the reproduction of even a classical face should leave scope for the individuality, skill and even the idiosyncrasies of the adapter.

The number of *Monotype* which introduces the new series has been printed by Mr. Bruce Rogers. The new version is fortunate in having such a sponsor. The number itself is a charming and characteristic specimen of Mr. Rogers's work, delicately rubricated with light rule borders, marginal notes and initial letters, and decorated with sixteenth-century "flowers," also cast on the Monotype. These are very pleasant as used by Mr. Rogers, but one dreads the efflorescence we are likely to get when the vogue spreads to "general printers" generally.

"U" OR "Ū"

I WONDER that none of the specimens of the revived "Garamond" before me ventures to use the form of the letter "U" with the serif at the foot of the thick right-hand stroke as used by modern calligraphers. Two examples of the letter in this form will be found on the front cover of *THE LONDON MERCURY*. In a letter printed in the May number of *THE LONDON MERCURY* Mr. Max Judge criticizes this form of the letter as a "makeshift" adopted of late years to correct the "fundamentally weak and unsatisfactory" form of the letter U used by modern printers, the "thick and thin strokes resulting in an unbalanced letter." It is a mistake, however, to suppose that the form Ū is an invention or even a "makeshift" of Mr. Edward Johnston and his followers. It is, of course, the old uncial form of the letter. But we need not go back to the fourth or fifth century for authority for its use. It was used even by English printers in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. I find it in my copy of the Jesuit Parsons's *Christian Directory*, dated 1601. That was doubtless printed abroad : not so, however, Drayton's *Poems*, printed by John Smethwick in 1637, which also has it ; and the use continued till near the end of the century, although the U form was much more common. The Drayton still retains VV for W : Garamond, of course, had no use for that letter at all ; and his modern adapters have had to design it anew in their several ways. Like Mr. Jacobi, I should be sorry to see the Ū form introduced into founts like Caslon's "Old Face," where U is already in possession ; but the designers of new founts might follow the lead given by our modern calligraphers and give the letter its less ungainly shape. Mr. Goudy has indeed done so in his "Forum Titling."

B. H. NEWDIGATE

A LETTER FROM GERMANY

Munich.

THOMAS MANN, the author of the *Buddenbrooks* and of *Der Tod in Venedig* (*Death in Venice*), has long been highly regarded by lovers of literature. He handles words with a goldsmith's skill and his talent is distinguished by a firm, fine, constructive feeling. During the war he suddenly came prominently before the public through the publication of an extraordinary book, *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen* (*Considerations of a non-political Person*). It was the kind of book least expected from an author whose special tendency seemed the purely "artistic." It was at a time when German hopes were sinking, when the mood was becoming "blue," and people were impatiently calling for peace at any price. His appeal then was to the best traditions of the German spirit, and he implored it to come to a realization of the situation. This gave him the reputation of being a "conservative." Knowing him well, I had to smile, even then, at this misinterpretation. He was born in the old Hanseatic town of Lübeck. From his mother's side he, as well as his talented brother Heinrich, had an exotic strain in his blood, which made him alien to the Wilhelmsian Germany. His Germany was that of Goethe. But for that very reason it irritated him to see the bourgeoisie suddenly plunging into heedless pacificism, seeking to deny Germany's past. At the present moment the same people, incapable of mastering, or even of controlling, their "moods," are going in for the wildest sort of Nationalism. Instead of patiently labouring at the building up of a new Germany, they imagine that by means of a "Putsch" they can conjure back the old world. It is only consistent that Thomas Mann should courageously issue a warning now, and affirm his faith in the Republic. He did this in an address at Berlin, which has been received with considerable resentment by the younger generation. During the war he was regarded as a militarist, and now suddenly he is counted a revolutionary. People have, therefore, concluded that he is a thorough-going opportunist, always turning with the wind. Exactly the reverse is the case. He is what is most difficult for a German—and rarest in Germany—an idealist with a clear conception of reality. Nietzsche once said that Germans were always thinking about something which had nothing to do with any particular case at issue.

Sapientis est ordinare, says Thomas Aquinas. The whole wisdom of life comes to this : to bring order into the contradictions of reality, to harmonize its demands with those of one's own spiritual needs, to adjust the past to the present. In substance this amounts to giving thought to that which at the moment is essential. Scarcely anyone in Germany has a keener scent for this than Thomas Mann ; he has such a passion for the essential that it sometimes becomes almost a mania ; he has the courage of his convictions and is not afraid of stating them. He feels this his duty, no matter how often he runs his head into a wall. So his followers continually change. His admirers of yesterday are, to-day, his bitterest enemies ; those who hitherto barely had a shrug of the shoulders for him, already see him as the next President of the Republic. Over-enthusiastic friends once in like fashion put forward Gerhart Hauptmann for this office. I hope both will be spared from this ; they have more important things to do. It is a curious fact that German literature still goes back to the writers of the older generation, the men of sixty, or, at least, fifty.

The young men are helpless. They have breath only for huge programmes ; their creative force is exhausted in the excessive demands of too daring schemes. These go far beyond the limits of traditional form. The latter they have smashed to bits, but they lack the power to create a new form in accordance with the new spirit which they represent. There is no genuine relation between their artistic intention and their power of execution. In ambitious intention they go far beyond us older men ; but in craftsmanship, in taste, in technical sureness, precision and skill they are far behind. We soon learned to be satisfied with little. With every new work they come and claim that here is something that will outlast eternity ; in a fortnight it is forgotten. In the 'eighties of last century, we older men, too, began with huge promises and unmeasured ambitions. To-day, when we compare the proud confidence of our own youth with our actual accomplishments, we find it difficult to avoid a sad smile of resignation. But however little the actual results correspond with the greatness promised, certain things have nevertheless been achieved. Something remains which history one day will judge. The youngest generation, which came to the front with the war or since the war, so far cannot boast of a single achievement to which it would be safe to assign a life of ten or even five years. So far it has not gone beyond mere talent. Each new work by Werfel, Fritz von Unruh, Kornfeld, Alfred Döblin, Kasimir Edschmid, Otto Flake, and perhaps four or five other men attracts attention. There is a certain bigness, beauty, and largeness of gesture, but you are always compelled to say to yourself : " No, this work in itself won't do ; it is merely an indication, a tentative, a promise of something bigger to come. There are great potentialities here, and to judge from them something really great will come one day."

And so we wait eagerly. But so far we have waited in vain, for the next work again is nothing but indication and potentiality, not the promised work itself. This modern literature does not get much beyond gymnastic exercises. It undeniably has the merit of having set itself a high standard, and of having shaken the nation out of a smug self-sufficiency. But up to the present it has not succeeded in producing a work that measures up to its own standards. It has rendered us dissatisfied with the good average productions, but the work of higher quality whose special advocate it has become is still due.

The theatre suffers particularly. It has always been dependent upon a mixed repertoire. It cannot live by masterpieces alone—in the first place because there are not enough masterpieces, and in the second because the spectator does not always wish to see masterpieces. He goes to the theatre, not to be deeply moved only, nor for the sake of the Aristotelian *Κάθαρσις*, but chiefly to be entertained. Entertainment within the limits of good taste, obtained without ignoble means, is an absolute essential in the theatre ; otherwise one has to apologise to oneself afterwards. Because the French know this and have the knack of supplying this demand with wit and charm, they dominate the stage of Europe. For a few years before the war we had gradually become their competitors. The number of authors who were able to construct an effective play, powerful in action, without offending good taste, was growing from year to year. Now the demands of criticism are set at such ideal heights that a play of mere entertainment is not even admitted. It insists upon measuring every German author by Shakespeare. For that reason young talents suffer from over-stimulation ; they habitually put on the grimaces of genius, but the public is not deceived by this, and, since it no longer gets what it wants in the theatre, it runs to the cinema. We are face to face with a real crisis in the theatre, and the blame for it lies primarily in the lack of understanding of the " superliterary "

criticism. A play that pleases people is automatically subject to this sort of criticism. Every influence is exerted to prevent plays that have pleased from becoming successful ; at any rate they are depreciated as far as possible. For an author a theatrical success is associated with so much abuse and suspicion that for weeks he hardly dares show his face among decent people. But a theatre cannot in the long run live by failures, and they are the only plays which can count upon a certain critical favour. *In magnis voluisse sat est* is a proverb which no theatre-going public anywhere in the world believes.

Emil Ludwig began his career by following Hofmannsthal's footsteps ; then he wrote a wise book on Bismarck, an unforgivable one on Wagner, and an admirable work on Goethe. Not long ago he told Rembrandt's story in *Rembrandt's Schicksal*. It is a quiet work of restrained power, filled with reverence and a keen sensitiveness for the obscure sides of life where the demonic and all sorts of problems touch one another. At the moment he is engaged in a law suit with the Ex-Kaiser Wilhelm, who objects to being put on the stage in Ludwig's play *Die Entlassung* (*The Dismissal*) while he is still alive. The chances are that the Kaiser will be unable to prevent production of the play, but it is doubtful whether Ludwig will obtain anything but a *succès de scandale*. There has been a good deal of revived interest in Bismarck, thanks to the appearance of the last volume of his *Mémoires* and Schüssler's book, *Bismarck's Sturz* (*Bismarck's Fall*), in which all the material is gathered and reworked. Ludwig's play consists of three compact acts. It is really in the manner of the older French plays, the scenes are well handled, there are many attractive surprises and all the parts are excellent. It is as amusing as a piece by Scribe, much sounder than one by Sardou, and yet it indicates the dark background of this instance of ingratitude and its far-reaching importance upon the world's history. Whatever form an author chooses in the last instance is his own affair. I can imagine *Hamlet* as a comedy and *Le Mariage de Figaro* as a tragedy. But one feels that Bismarck's figure is of heroic proportions and one should prefer it reserved for a Shakespeare. As long as such a one is lacking, one can conceive it only in association with Wagnerian music. Here is another instance of the evil consequences which arise out of the extravagant and exaggerated literary requirements of the young generation. The public itself has got into the habit of taking only masterpieces seriously. Every work of art contains in itself the standard by which it is measured. An unspoiled public has an instinctive feeling for this standard and unconsciously applies it. The young men of the present day are not satisfied with this natural standard ; they self-consciously apply another one of their own making, and, of course, cannot measure up to it. Emil Ludwig is much more honest ; he knows what he can do, and knows quite well that he does not reach Shakespeare's stature. So he has not tried to give us the illusion of a Shakespearean Bismarck ; he is satisfied with an Emil Ludwig Bismarck. But the public, for the present the reader, and, I fear, if the play is produced, the spectator will not be so easily satisfied. It will be annoyed that Emil Ludwig is not Shakespeare, or that at least he does not act as though he were. It does not matter so much that our young poets live beyond their means or have poetic ambitions beyond their power. It is much more dangerous that the public is disappointed when a poet is honest enough not to attempt to pretend to a higher rank than he deserves.

HERMANN BAHR

CHRONICLES

DRAMA

THE FAITHFUL SHEPHERDESS (<i>John Fletcher</i>)	PHŒNIX SOCIETY
ROBERT E. LEE (<i>John Drinkwater</i>)	REGENT
THE ULSTER PLAYERS	SCALA
THE LILIES OF THE FIELD (<i>J. Hastings Turner</i>)	AMBASSADORS
ELECTRA (<i>Euripides : Gilbert Murray's translation</i>)	FORTUNE PLAYERS

THERE is little doubt but that *The Faithful Shepherdess*, by John Fletcher, which the Phœnix Society, with the co-operation of Sir Thomas Beecham, produced on June 24th and 25th, is a play to fill Mr. William Archer with horror. It is badly constructed because its author paid no attention to those new methods invented by French dramatists of the nineteenth century and so faithfully copied in this country ever since. If it is not so full of murders as the average Elizabethan play, against which Mr. Archer reasons so admirably,* it must yet offend his good sense even more outrageously, since the most innocuous female character in the play is murdered not once but twice—having been restored to life on the first occasion by the God of a River. Could anything be more glaringly absurd and illogical? Let me put beside it an example of the more rational sort of drama, which is likely to appeal to the finely educated public of to-day. The modern play, whose theme was the moral struggle of a woman who cannot marry her deceased husband's brother although she sees her brother able to marry his deceased wife's sister, would appear to Mr. Archer and to the "stinking multitude" of 1923 as sensible and interesting. If the wife were represented as torn between her love for her husband's brother and her passion for morality, and by this moral struggle brought to a nervous breakdown and the threshold of death, then to be restored to life and love by the passing of the DECEASED HUSBAND'S BROTHER BILL, there might not be a voice raised in the country (except mine!) to declare this dramatised moral struggle pure unadulterated fudge, and this dramatic theme the most despicable farrago of nonsense. So strong always is the influence of the age that to vast numbers of intelligent people to-day a Deceased Husband's Brother Bill, delivering a wife from immorality, appears to be less fantastic than a God of the River delivering a murdered shepherdess to a second murder.

It is impossible to engage in a philosophical discussion here on the relativity of rationality, but I should like to point out how oddly minds most proud of their common sense are ensnared by temporary illusions as to what is and is not rational. Those dramatic critics who can get no further than declaring the plot of *The Faithful Shepherdess* absurd are wasting their own and our time. Remove your standpoint and what seemed reasonable will at once seem unreasonable. If a God of a River and a twice murdered corpse appear ridiculous to 1923, believe me the Deceased Wife's Sister-Brother situation of 1923 will appear ridiculous to 2023, and by 2223 (to give it the 300 years that separate us from Fletcher) will no doubt be adequate proof to our descendants that we were quite mad.

* The Old Drama and the New, by William Archer. Heinemann. 10s. 6d.

It is beside the mark to judge works of art by their correspondence with the vagaries of intellectual and moral fashions. This is the procedure of the uneducated man who laughs at a Giotto fresco or a Bayeux tapestry or a Haydn aria. Fortunately in Oxford and Cambridge and a few universities in Europe a certain amount of real education is available, and it has been sufficient to prevent ignorant scribblers from denouncing Æschylus's *Oresteia* or Euripides' *Bacchæ* as absurd because their plots are to the modern ideas of the editors of our daily newspapers fantastically incredible. But it is not because the newspaper rationalist does not think they are absurd that he does not say so. He is merely intimidated by the prestige of the Greek Classics. Class-snobbishness stops him from sneering at ancient Greek literature, except very occasionally when someone like Mr. H. G. Wells gives him a push from the back.

The Faithful Shepherdess—as performed to music admirably arranged by Sir Thomas Beecham, with beautiful scenes and, with one or two exceptions, no less beautiful dresses by Mr. Norman Wilkinson—was one of the most delightful productions I have ever seen in a theatre. It gave me quite extraordinary pleasure. It was very well produced by Miss Edith Craig, and the cast would have been altogether exceptional had the men been as good as the women. The Priest was especially weak, but Mr. Harold Scott as the Satyr did well. Of the women Miss Cathleen Nesbitt was suited to perfection in the part of Amarillis. It was a pleasure to hear her lovely voice speaking such admirable verse and her dress was one of Mr. Wilkinson's happiest efforts. Miss Nesbitt is much more suited to such romantic work than to the modern drawing-room comedy in which she so often has to waste her very individual talents. Miss Isabel Jeans had the very difficult part of the wanton shepherdess Cloe, and she played it with just the right lightness of touch and with a sparkling infectious gaiety. Miss Nell Carter (Clorin) and Miss Mary Merrall (Amoret) were both admirable. Fletcher's verse was delightful to hear so well spoken. It has been described as "saccharinic." I can imagine a sour gorgonzola-devouring ruffian thus describing honey, but if you have a taste for honey you will find Fletcher's *The Faithful Shepherdess* not "saccharinic," but the softest, most fragrant and delicious honey.

Mr. Drinkwater's *Robert E. Lee* strikes me as better than much previous work. It is neatly constructed in a series of episodes which produce an accumulative effect. You are made to realise the duration and progress of the Civil War between North and South, and Mr. Henry Caine makes effective use of a banjo and an old plantation song. The play is occasionally touching and, although rather drawn out, is never actually dull. Mr. Drinkwater's weakness is his lack of sincerity. Even in *Robert E. Lee* there is the empty, insincere "talk" of the idealistic propagandist who is bent on pointing out to you the nobility of this man or that. Robert E. Lee never comes to life, he is a mere Drinkwater hero, a theme out of an Elgar symphony marked by its composer to be played *nobilmente*.

The Ulster Players from Belfast gave a short season at the Scala Theatre last month and proved themselves to be an excellent company in several interesting plays. It is to be hoped that they will return again, as they brought a welcome breath of fresh air into the stuffy theatrical atmosphere of London. I recommend a visit to *The Drone* and to *Throwbacks*, two Irish farcical comedies in their repertory, as a cure for any man's depression. That group of players known as "The Fortune Players" gave a very good performance of *Electra* as their second production—remarkable for the excellent treatment of the chorus. The chorus in a Greek play performance is nearly always an eyesore, but Mrs. Penelope Wheeler, who produced the play (and took the part of *Electra* very effectively) succeeded in making the

chorus less like a disorganised and partly paralysed ballet than any other producer whose work is known to me.

In *The Lilies of the Field* Mr. John Hastings Turner has written an amusing light comedy well worth a visit for its own sake, for the delightful acting of Mr. J. H. Roberts as an absurd parson and for an hour of Miss Edna Best and Miss Meggie Albanesi as the Parson's Twins. It is also good to see Miss Gertrude Kingston's perfect deportment on the stage.

DRAMATIC LITERATURE

THREE PLAYS BY A. A. MILNE. Chatto & Windus. 7s. 6d.

ONCE in reviewing a volume of plays by Mr. A. A. Milne I said that I thought the best thing in the book was the Preface, and again I am tempted to make the same remark, although *The Dover Road*, which is printed in this volume, is an amusing light comedy. But Mr. Milne has revenged himself and all dramatic authors upon the critics so superbly in the following criticism of *Hamlet*, in the manner of the average modern critic, that after reading it his plays seem something of an anti-climax :

Mr. William Shakespeare, whose well-meaning little costume play was given in London for the first time last week, bears a name that is new to us, although we understand . . . that he has a considerable local reputation in Warwickshire as a sonneteer. Why a writer of graceful little sonnets should have the ambition, still less conceive himself to have the ability, to create a tragic play capable of holding the attention of a London audience for three hours, we are unable to imagine. Merely to kill off seven (or was it eight ?) of the leading characters in a play is not to write a tragedy. It is not thus that the master-dramatists have purged our souls with pity and terror. Mr. Shakespeare, like so many other young writers, mistakes violence for power, and in his unfortunate lighter moments, buffoonery for humour. The real tragedy of last night was that a writer should so misunderstand and misuse the talent given to him. For Mr. Shakespeare one cannot deny has talent. He has a certain pleasing gift of words. Every now and then a neat line catches the ear . . . but a succession of neat lines does not make a play. . . .

This hits off perfectly the average critic's attitude to all drama, except the most popular drivel. Mr. Shaw once complained of a certain critic that no one reading his notices of a play by Mr. Shaw would ever have realized that the audience had been extremely amused. Critics forget that the greatest play is not that which has the fewest faults, but that which has the richest life. Perfection is for bandbox dramatists—dummies without souls !

W. J. TURNER

MUSIC

TWO OPERAS—WITH REFLECTIONS

THE hero of *The Perfect Fool* is so-called because he thinks less than he says. He says one word, the shortest in the English language, and because this is an opera he speaks it instead of singing it ; that is the perfection of his folly. (The only comment to be made on this is that Mr. Raymond Ellis is thereby wasted.) When he is not thinking he “ just sits,” or lies about in attitudes sufficiently engaging to win the Princess’s heart. Her love is a very perfect thing—for scenic purposes ; and if she were anybody but Miss Maggie Teyte we could hardly bear the folly of its words and tunes. The foolishness of all is the Wizard, abstract and colourless, until he returns later in the form of the Traveller as the perfect Wagnerian ; his folly and his perfection are put in the mouths of two different singers, perhaps because Mr. Robert Parker’s voice would be too unmistakeable to deceive anybody.

The plot, as you divine, is perfectly foolish—Hans Andersen without his pith or humanity. The words also are a poor thing, but Holst’s own. Since librettos have usually tried to have a little point he has decided that his shall have none. Away with meiosis and oxymoron and epitheton ornans ; “ these numbers will I tear and write in prose ” ! But “ rimes are guards on wanton Cupid’s hose.” At worst they help us to remember things ; at best they make a memorable line. The Traveller’s alliterations are only a dig at Wagner’s translators, of course, not at Wagner, who was as much entitled to take what he found in the *Nibelungen-Lied* as the Poet Laureate is to adopt the rhythms of *Piers Plowman*. However, the alliterations don’t matter, because the orchestra is vociferous just at that moment. The question is whether lack of point is enough basis for an opera, or only for a revue. People may answer that differently. I thought the answer was, on the whole, if not in the “ noisiest negative ” yet “ No ! ”

Still, this is a real attempt at English opera. Balfe and Sullivan are the two names that have survived, and they struck, respectively, upon what are the two fundamentals for an English audience—sentiment undisguised and unalleviated, and humour that does not trouble to be witty. The humour in *The Perfect Fool* is not exactly Aristophanic nor Moliéresque, nor even Sheridanous, and it will therefore not live ; but the instinct was right. We are not as a nation going to take opera seriously, and it is no use trying to make us. Secondly, it is thoroughly scenic throughout, and with the history of the masques behind us we know that that is what we want. It is not only that the grouping and the lighting are both excellent, but the ballets (which come at the very beginning, as James I. would have loved to have them) have a reason for being there, and are unusual and spontaneous, not dragged in as something expected of an opera. And the personages—we can hardly say characters, since there is no character-drawing about them—seem natural ; they are there because they are wanted, not to make up a play or obey a convention. They are abstract enough, in all conscience, like those of the *Immortal Hour*, or of *The Ring*, for the matter of that ; but types suit opera better than concretions. And, thirdly—but we will have another paragraph for the music.

Novello’s edition of the vocal score does not print the “ Fugal ” Overture (Op. 40), since it was added afterwards (to Op. 39). That is just as well, for it has nothing to

do with the opera ; there is not a theme in common, and it contributes nothing to atmosphere. It serves, however, to remind us that Holst's mind is symphonic (although he has written no symphony), that he does not easily find himself on a small canvas. It is when he can get away with a pedal point (Anglicè, get a lift on) that we begin to sit up and take notice. There is something open-air about his music, as there is about the English water-colours. He, and Vaughan Williams too, takes a tune or a harmony because he wants it, not because it will fit with something else that is coming, or be a part of a " composition." It is something of this that he has got into the opera at large. There is none of Mozart's close characterisation, none of the logic of Wagner's motives. It is a hedgerow, not a herbaceous border. Consequently some things in it are downright ugly. Why not ? Many things in Nature and life are, especially if we look at them too close. But if you let this music just have its way—if you merely skim the piano score, for instance, instead of piecing it laboriously out, or keep an active eye on the stage and a passive ear for the orchestra—you will probably find that it has said its say more freshly and more modestly than in many operas that you know. As for the echoes of *The Ring*, *Boris*, *Il Trovatore*, and one of Handel's Organ Concertos (this last probably accidental), parodies must be pungent and delicate, and these are neither. They are slapdash and laboured ; they stare instead of glancing. All we can say is that parodies are not in Holst's line ; Stanford has done much better in *The Critic* and the *Ode to Discord*. The best parody is when you say what you, for your own purpose, want to say, only in the other man's style—as Cassella did once or twice, with Brahms and Debussy, for instance—something that they never yet said but, if they had said, would have said in that way. The greatest musical success in the opera is when the chorus returns after its (stage-) fright with the " piano pianissimo, eccoci quà " business in fugal full-dress ; and this is quite the right sort of parody.

Dame Ethel Smyth's *Fête Galante* is in one act and plays about forty minutes ; the story tells itself. Mr. Edward Shanks has versified it, but we did not catch enough of the words to be conscious of the fact, or of more than that we were not listening to the usual forced incoherencies called *libretto*. The plot is slight, but sufficient ; the hero, who refuses to be a Modred, is hanged on the spot where Guinevere betrayed the King. The Watteau garden in which it all happens is filled by a conventional sarabande, a danseuse, and some puppets who sing, and away in the shrubbery is one of the best unseen choirs we have heard. But the two specially musical crises are the meeting of the lovers and the moment when Pierrot is making up his mind to do " the done thing " ; and the composer's problem here was how not to institute comparisons on the one hand with *Tristan* and on the other with *Pagliacci*. In this she has succeeded. But a more positive success is the way in which the music really fits the character of the drama. The drama tells us that if you are good you will be happy, but you will not have a good time. We know this theoretically, but practically we all believe that things will come right in the end. And then they come wrong ! We feel sad, and say to ourselves that it is not an easy job to do the done thing, after all. The music says the same. It proceeds in a virtuous, circumspect, " Herzogenbergisch " kind of way till it has lulled us into a kind of peace-with-all-the-world-but-more-especially-with-ourselves, and then suddenly drops brine into our cup of happiness. It is always going to be, but never is exactly, beautiful ; we are made to feel that there is something selfish about beauty, something we should never have wanted if we could see life steadily and whole. So the sarabande must end with a flick of contempt and Pierrot's song must wilt away into aimlessness. It is better so, the music says, than living in Remphan.

People often write, or offer to write, articles on the Future of Opera or the Future of English Opera. It sounds to me rather like writing on the Future of Beauty or of Happiness or of Virtue. There is no such thing as happiness ; there are only happy people. There is no such thing as opera ; there are only operas. And then English ? Are not English people much more like than they are unlike the rest of Europe ? Ought their operas to be very different ? What a man, English or other, wants—or may I boldly say, what one man wants—is, first, an intelligible story with people saying the sort of thing they would actually say in decently educated society, if they were being natural without specially trying to be so. Secondly, let a man come on to the stage, or stand or sit there, just as he enters, stands in, or sits in a room. I know it is very difficult, and I am sure I couldn't do it, if I tried, without a great many preliminary failures, but I am also sure it is worth learning. No doubt a cigarette (which has not yet invaded opera, for obvious reasons, though a whisky and soda has) gives an air of naturalness ; but only a forced air. We never know, we English males, what to do with our hands, except put them in a pocket ; but we might learn. When we are beset by the larger emotions, we do not, whatever the Tristan or the Radamès of the moment may think, throw our arms about. What we do do I don't know, but it would not be impossible to find out in the way in which George Cruikshank found out how to draw Fagin.

And then the music, which should be so modest and retiring that one seldom thinks about it. That sounds an inglorious part for the composer to have to play, but, after all, it is the part that he has played uncommonly well in the two operas we have been discussing, as well as in *The Immortal Hour* and in Gatty's *Tempest*.

And if we could have all these things, need we insist upon such a good quality of voice ? Indeed, we may insist, but we do not often get it, because the continuous work of a season spoils all but the very best. And for this the singers are partly to blame. They hope to be heard above the orchestra ; what they ought to do is to be heard below it. It sounds a paradox, but Miss Maggie Teyte did that to my knowledge in *Madam Butterfly*. That is to say, every now and then the orchestra drowned her, but she sang on without attempting to raise her voice, and it was surprising how little one missed.

A. H. FOX STRANGWAYS

THE FINE ARTS

THE ROYAL ACADEMY. Summer Exhibition. Burlington House

THE NEW ENGLISH ART CLUB. R.W.S. Galleries

THE LONDON GROUP. Mansard Gallery

IN the absence of any work by Mr. Augustus John in the Academy this year, interest was concentrated on the paintings by Sir William Orpen and Messrs. Philpot, Kelly, Connard, Clausen and Cameron. Sir William Orpen's war allegory aroused the greatest amount of discussion, but possibly a larger and more spontaneous measure of appreciation was bestowed on the Whistlerian portrait by Mr. Philpot, *The Dancer*. The first picture purchased by the Chantrey authorities seemed to have been a somewhat tame landscape by Mr. Clausen.

Sir William Orpen's pictorial allegory resembles a story with an obscure moral. It would be incorrect to call its appeal "literary," because there is no reason to believe that the moral would be more intimately expressed in the form of literature than pictorially. For it lies in a barren factual contrast between opulent surroundings and ghostly and rugged soldiers. The feeling of the picture is, if anywhere, in the painting of the opulent surroundings. Mr. Philpot, like Mr. Kelly, is a talented painter with a keen appreciation of what will appeal to upper middle-class sentiment. Lack of original imagination is well counterbalanced by dexterous and sober adaptation of the abundant material of the aristocratic past. His *Dancer* is actually not so good a picture as that of *Two Sisters*, shown in his recent exhibition at the Grosvenor Galleries; the latter picture evinced traces of something more than mere accomplishment.

If only there were a few paintings which struck a really individual note, this year's Academy would be above the average: for the present pictures would form, with some exceptions, a tolerable background. A big exhibition cannot hope to be filled with first-class work, but its main justification is that it may from time to time contain something above the average. It is true that it is not possible to be very much more enthusiastic about either the New English Art Club or the London Group Exhibitions. Yet undoubtedly both include more work than the Academy that merits serious consideration and that is free, at any rate, from the taint of commercialism. They do not, however, by any means possess a monopoly of either sincerity or promise; and, indeed, both show a tendency to give greater prominence to the loud or the hyper-subtle work than to the honest and direct statement. Miss Watson Williams, for instance, of the London Group, gained the inevitable notice by certain garish and crude scenes of cafés and bedrooms. But her painting has neither the sincerity nor the promise of that of Miss Naomi Simon at the Academy. Mr. Porter and Mr. John Nash show not uninteresting landscapes at the London Group, which, however, have their parallels in the Academy in the landscapes of Mr. Cundall, Mr. Clausen, and Mr. Cameron. Mr. Walter Sickert's portrait head had the ugliness of inexpressive distortion. Mr. Sickert is an artist whose reputation can rest on more than mere abstract technical values, which are not really æsthetic values at all. The uncertainty of intention in his work is due rather to a lack of originality than to the deliberate experimenting of an original mind. Mr. Steer is another painter whose work is

enormously unequal: but he is a bigger man than Mr. Sickert. Mr. Steer's large portrait of Mrs. Hammersley, which has been shown at the Goupil Gallery, challenges comparison with a Gainsborough in quality as well as in style. But his pictures at the New English—a portrait and some landscapes in oils and water-colours are disappointing. I overheard the criticism that they were "generic" and not "particular" Steers. The meaning was clear and good. Sir C. J. Holmes is also too "generic." One would like to see in his painting more of that struggle at individual, as opposed to generalised, expression which he rightly praises in his fine essays on Constable and Rembrandt. Perhaps the most convincing painting in the New English was Professor Brown's *Repairing Shed*. Other pictures meriting notice were Mr Ginner's *Flash Walk*, Miss Blake's *River At Dinan*, Miss Mackinnon's *Winter Landscape*, Mr. Wilkie's *Otford Mount*, and the drawings by Mr. Maresco Pearce (120), Mr. Muirhead Bone (137) and Mr. C. S. Cheston (144). Most of these were comparatively quiet works, and did not attract immediate attention.

THE CONTEMPORARY ART SOCIETY. Paintings and Drawings, Grosvenor House, 30th June to 8th July

FRENCH IMPRESSIONIST SCHOOL at Agnews, Knoedlers and the Lefevre Galleries

THERE are several societies with ambitious programmes for promoting art, but the programmes seem difficult of realisation. It is not easy to promote art by organisation. The Contemporary Art Society has no far-reaching programme, but it has done a great deal of good work. It has bought important and interesting modern pictures which will one day be included in the London and provincial public collections. It has shown greater taste and foresight in its purchases than the "authorised" buying committees. Perhaps one of the reasons for its success is that the purchases are not made by a committee, but by individual members chosen annually. Provincial galleries are mostly run by committees: that is one of the reasons why they are so infernally dull.

The too brief exhibition of the Society held at Grosvenor House included work by nearly all the contemporary artists of importance, although perhaps it leaned too heavily on the side of the "moderns." In certain cases I think the selection of pictures has been unfortunate. For instance, there were numerous paintings by Mark Gerther, both early and recent, but they represented rather the artist in search of his true inspiration by experimenting in the styles of other artists than the actual discovery. I would prefer one well realised still life to all of these exercises. Again, only one of the Henry Lambs, a portrait of Stanley Spencer, would stand prolonged scrutiny. Stanley Spencer, on the other hand, was well represented. But why did he magnify that finely modelled head to more than twice its size under the normal "system of reference"? It was good to see again that beautiful nude by Wilson Steer, Duncan Grant's fascinating landscape, *The White Gate*, and also John Nash's *Cornfield*. The prints were not up to the standard of the paintings.

Lack of space forbids more than a passing reference to the magnificent exhibitions of French impressionist pictures which have been held at Agnews, Knoedlers and the Lefevre Galleries. They must, surely, have made many converts.

PUBLICATION

DEGAS. By JULIUS MEIER-GRAEFE. Translated by J. HOLROYD REECE. Ernest Benn, Ltd. £2 12s. 6d. net.

IN his book on Van Gogh, Herr Meier-Graefe allowed himself to depart from his usual method of historical and critical exegesis and write what was almost a novel. The first page of his essay on Degas recalls the vivid descriptions of the *Van Gogh*, but the rest is pure "objective" criticism of the art of Degas with only a few incidental biographical allusions. It is a well-constructed essay leading up to a kind of climax in which is revealed what the author considers to be the critical moment and consummation of the artist's development. The attitude is severely detached with no bias in favour of Degas, and Degas is made out to have been an impossible bear of a man. Surely it is an exaggeration in his case to talk of "the poverty of a soul which never knew any real joy." The earlier chapters are in the nature of a destructive analysis, both of the work of Degas and of some of our own cherished illusions about that work. And one feels that in the main he is right. He has concluded after what has obviously been an anxious and exhaustive study of the pictorial work of Degas that it was only late in life that the artist discovered his true medium of expression, pastel. Degas, in his opinion, was not endowed with the fluid sensibility of a Manet. In his early days he was artistically jejune, a painter of allegorical and anecdotal pictures. And when he turned from them to studies of horse racing he did not go beyond the specialist's interests in particulars: he never "generalised" and thereby attained to art. This seems to me a misuse of the term "generalise": but the meaning is fairly clear. The same defect is found by the author in the oil paintings of dancers. In these Degas would have been nothing more than a highly accomplished illustrator had it not been for two saving æsthetic qualities, space effect and angle of vision. The latter, if not directly derived from, was encouraged and stimulated by, the newly discovered Japanese woodcuts.

After twenty years of persistent effort, never completely successful, Degas penetrated to the medium which completely expressed his true æsthetic impulse. At last in his pastels his colour and drawing became wedded. Yet even his perfection, according to the author, is merely the promise of something greater, and only attained a "slender greatness." This is the gist of his analysis. It carries us a good way towards understanding Degas, but it burkes the central problem of the sentiment of the artist. Consequently it is never clear what exactly he means when he speaks of lack of success, of recession and angle of vision and of slender greatness.

Nevertheless, this a valuable essay in criticism. The translation is excellent.

HOWARD HANNAY

POETRY

POEMS. By GEORGE SANTAYANA. Constable. 7s. 6d.

OUT OF THE FLAME. By OSBERT SITWELL. Grant Richards. 6s.

PRIDE AND OTHER POEMS. By DOROTHY WELLESLEY. Heinemann. 5s.

MANSOUL. By CHARLES DOUGHTY. Limited Signed Edition. 500 Copies. Jonathan Cape. 21s.

AZAL AND ESDRAS. By FREDERIC IRVING TAYLOR. Foreword by T. W. H. CROSLAND. Selwyn & Blount. 7s. 6d.

PROSERPINE AND MIDAS. Two unpublished Mythological Dramas by MARY SHELLEY. Edited with Introduction by A. KOSZUL. Milford. 3s. 6d.

MR. SANTAYANA, who learnt English after Spanish, is very modest about his poetry ; but in the very preface in which he disclaims a high poetic ambition he writes sentences which prove both his complete mastery of English and his independence of thought. "Verse, after all, is a form of rhetoric, as is all speech and even thought," is characteristic in its ease, unpretentiousness and truth ; and those qualities will be found also in his poems. It has been the custom of his readers, whilst praising his sonnets, to ignore his other poems. Certainly in such sonnets as "O World, thou chooseth not the better part," "Love not as do the flesh-imprisoned men," "What riches have you that you deem me poor" and "Our youth is like a rustic at the play," he reaches as high a level as any modern sonnet writer. But I personally like his odes and miscellaneous poems even better, for they give his brooding spirit more room for those peculiar meditations in which he looks, now from middle distance, at the spectacle of life, now at that spectacle small against the eternal background. His detached attitude—though only in one aspect of it—is stated by himself at a sonnet's end :

The crown of olive let another wear ;
It is my crown to mock the runner's beat
With gentle wonder and with laughter sweet.

That may be supplemented by his prayer elsewhere for :

A staunch heart, nobly calm, averse to evil,
The windy sky for breath, the sea, the mountain,
A well-born, gentle friend, his spirit's brother,
Ever beside him.

who, with him, may

Learn to love, in all things mortal, only
What is eternal.

That attitude is perfectly expressed in his modern pindaric on athletics and football ; but the finest of all his poems, that on King's College Chapel, in which both subtly and broadly he paints a modern service, shown again * a background both of mediæval Christianity and of the whole Christian and Hebrew record, is the cry of a hankering sceptic who wishes that he could define his faith as precisely as he can define his doubts. It is a noble little book ; the quintessential expression of a philosopher, an artist, and a suffering man : a fluting which will be heard long after the contemporary blare has died away.

Mr. Osbert Sitwell's book is much the best that he has done. He still has to remember that printed writings are meant as means of communication with readers,

not as memoranda for the author's own use : his thoughts and images are often flung out as random notes. He has also to take more trouble with his versification, instead of succumbing to eye-rhymes and gross accentuations which might have been produced by a Babu using a metronome. But the taste for bric-à-brac, and the reminiscences (not necessarily unpleasing) of *Under the Hill* are less prominent than they were. There is evident now an increasingly intense effort to see things and record things seen, and a growing tendency to express genuine feelings and thoughts about life instead of merely amusing, or would-be amusing, fancies. More precision still was needed to make the intermittently charming songs on the Mexican Dwarfs successful ; it is no good cutting up pictures and throwing the bits at us. The satires, also, are mixtures of crudity, passion, ungainliness and wit, " The Serpent " being the best of them. Use does not acclimatise me to poems like *Parade* or lines like :

Where little waves claw the golden grapes,
Spring at the terraced hills like lions.

And Mr. Sitwell's poems still make me feel that there should be a close-season for unicorns. But there are beautiful things, however disjunct, in the large mental and physical panorama of *Out of the Flame*. Patches of *English Gothic* have a novel force, and the two garden pieces, particularly *Neptune in Chains*, are defective only because the author is honestly struggling to deal with his material without resorting to any of the obvious and inherited means.

Many of the best poems in *Pride* have appeared in our own columns and it would be unseemly to say much about them. There is an ardour in them lacking in most modern verse, a masculine strength and recklessness that sometimes finds expression in sharp and biting phrase, sometimes flings about an eloquence that sometimes lapses into a too random rhetoric. *Pride* is the amplest and finest thing in the book, a poem with something of Emily Brontë in it, a fierceness of feeling jetting out hard terse words packed with meaning. I should like to see its author attempting a longer dramatic work ; she has the ear, the large yet direct utterance, the capacity for climax, and the discipline of writing verses not directly personal would have good results upon her art.

Mr. Doughty's *Mansoul* has been reissued in a Limited Edition : an extraordinary mixture of naïveté and sagacity, clumsiness and beauty, archaism and modernism. A man can either read everything that Mr. Doughty writes or cannot get through a page : I am of the former faction, but not a violent propagandist. Mr. Taylor's verse bears much the same relation to Milton's as Mr. Doughty's does to Langland's : he is so steeped in his original that he cannot help speaking in its accents. There is personality in the work, but not the personality of a man who will enrich English poetry : rather that of an eccentric whose eccentricity it is to use the vocabulary and the lofty rhetoric of Milton in an age which favours the colloquial and the direct. The two Mythological Dramas by Mary Shelley, which Mr. Koszul has edited, are amusing as documents, but not valuable as works of art ; their chief interest is that they gave the settings for some of the loveliest of Shelley's classical songs. *The Best Poems of 1922* is a misnomer. Assuming that Mr. Moulton has made a perfect choice, even at that all he can claim to have collected is the best poems which, in 1922, appeared in periodicals : for he eschews anything which " came out," during his year, in a book but not in a paper. The collection, if not regarded as exclusive, is interesting ; some good poems, English and American, are here, which are not accessible anywhere else, and Mr. Philip Hagreen's decorations are so delicious as to make the book worth having for them alone.

J. C. S.

FICTION

THE DOVES' NEST : AND OTHER STORIES. By KATHERINE MANSFIELD.
Constable. 7s. 6d.

THE BLACK DOG. By A. E. COPPARD. Cape. 7s. 6d.

GREY WETHERS. By V. SACKVILLE-WEST. Heinemann. 7s. 6d.

OUR MR. WRENN. By SINCLAIR LEWIS. Cape. 7s. 6d.

THIS posthumous volume of Katherine Mansfield's stories is not merely a number of fragments huddled together by an enthusiastic literary executor : it is a volume planned, and even named, by the writer herself, although the greater number of the stories contained in it are unfinished. So far the Introductory Note, which gives some extracts from her journal, throwing some light upon her later attitude towards her work, has attracted more attention than the stories themselves ; but as this journal and other autobiographical matter will, I trust, be published soon in full, and as it seems to me a little impertinent to comment upon such brief quotations at this stage, I propose to pass on at once to the stories. Six of these are finished, and of the remainder two at least, *A Married Man's Story* and *The Doves' Nest*, are quite long fragments that leave the reader, in some odd way, with the feeling that they are complete. But even the rest, the merest beginnings, are capital reading. Even though we never come to the point, and do not know—as people say—what the stories are *about*, it does not seem to matter very much. The delicate enchantments of her art are there as of old. A short story, which is, after all, a very tiny affair, can give us two things, a point (or a situation) and a manner (or an atmosphere), and a really good one will give us both. Katherine Mansfield herself—very naturally, seeing that she, like any other writer, could not estimate the value of her manner, or the atmosphere she could create—thought that her stories depended upon their points, upon the situations she brought about in them. Actually it was her unique manner that carried them off, and in some of them it was the point that spoilt, rather than made, the story. The latter would blossom naturally from English life, but the central situation, the point of the story, would sometimes come not from English life but from Continental literature. There would be an obvious falsification. Within her own range, dealing with children, lonely women, and the flickering lights and shadows of early married life, she was incomparable, but outside that range, working as she did from subtle self-knowledge and a delicate memory and not from a power of wide and detached observation, she was apt to go badly astray. At her best, of course, she got everything right. There is, for example, a story in this present volume, *The Doll's House*, in which both the manner and the point are almost perfect. Three little girls, whom we have met before, are given a large doll's house and invite all their school-friends in turn to see it. Among other wonderful things, this doll's house has a little lamp, an amber lamp with a white globe, standing on the middle of its dining-room table—the very acme of childish poetry. There are, however, two little pariahs among their schoolfellows, the Kelvey girls, who are not invited because they are never invited to anything, but are always shunned by all and sundry. The youngest owner of the doll's house, in a generous moment, invites the Kelveys into the yard to see it, and they have just time to obtain a glimpse of it before they are discovered by Aunt Beryl, who is in a bad temper, and driven out with hard words. What follows is best given in the writer's own words :

When the Kelveys were well out of sight of Burnells' they sat down to rest on a big red drainpipe by the side of the road. Lil's cheeks were still burning : she took

off the hat with the quill and held it on her knee. Dreamily they looked over the hay paddocks, past the creek, to the group of wattles where Logan's cows stood waiting to be milked. What were their thoughts ?

Presently our Else nudged up close to her sister. But now she had forgotten the cross lady. She put out a finger and stroked her sister's quill : she smiled her rare smile.

" I seen the little lamp," she said softly.

Then both were silent once more.

Now, this is a good story even in my shockingly bald summary. In Miss Mansfield's own words, it is a little gem. Here for once the point of the story conveys to the mind something of what the manner always does ; it suggests the way in which life is shot through with poetry and vision, and it deepens the significance of things. Her manner always does this. There is a passage in a later fragment which runs : " Edie has been playing from memory ; it's as though the air still tingles." In all her stories you may say that the air tingles. She was one of the few writers of our time who made life seem as rich, exciting and significant at every turn as it does in one's best moments. In one of the autobiographical passages quoted in the Introduction, we catch her making the tired artist's old cry, that she does not want to write but to *live* ; and I only hope there was someone there to tell her that during the time she was creating these stories she was living more intensely than most people could hope to do if they were given a few centuries of existence.

Mr. Coppard has not the unique personal vision, the occasional ultimate felicities of Miss Mansfield, but he is a sturdy and versatile craftsman. This last book is the most representative collection of stories he has given us. He tells many different kinds of tales, and is bright, grave, ironical, fantastic by turns, but achieves unity by virtue of his manner, which is not, of course, the same for every tale, but which is always very obviously his own personal property. His ideas are not always good, and there are several things in this collection—*Huxley Rustem*, *Big Game* and *Luxury* are examples—that are much too slight ; and there are several others that smell, if only faintly, of the magazines. But he has a manner and style, personal but not obtrusively so, that must be a godsend to a teller of tales. He has a bright, particularising style, always ready to fasten on to the concrete thing, to state the facts, to give, as it were, names and addresses, without ever overloading the frail craft with facts, a style that immediately carries conviction and sets a tale moving. Here is a passage from that little story in which Simple Simon, the old countryman, finds his way to heaven :

Now, it was very pleasant where he found himself, very pleasant indeed, and in no ways different from the fine parts of the earth. He went onwards, and the first place he did come to was a farmhouse with a kitchen door. He knocked and it was opened. It was a large kitchen : it had a cracked stone floor and white rafters above it with hooks on them and shearing irons and a saddle. And there was a smoking hearth and an open oven with bright charred wood burning in it, a dairy shelf beyond with pans of cream, a bed of bracken for a dog in the corner by the pump, and a pet sheep wandering about. It had the number roo painted on its fleece and a loud bell was tinkling round its neck. There was a fine young girl stood smiling at him : the plait of her hair was thick as a rope of onions and as shining with the glint in it. Simon said to her : " I've been a-walking, and I seem to have got a bit dampified like, just a touch o' damp in the knees of my breeches, that's all."

And if Mr. Coppard, when he is attempting a richer and riper idiom than usual, will steer clear of Anglo-Irish tricks of speech (a danger with him), he has it in him to write any and every kind of short tale extremely well. The title story, *The Black Dog*, is a story, bathed in atmosphere, of one of those ineffectual love affairs which seem

to fascinate our contemporaries ; it is full of light and colour and quaintly vivid little pictures, and it leaves one, as so many of these things do, with the feeling that one has just passed through some odd and rather disturbing experience. This story, with one or two others, such as *The Handsome Lady* and *The Ballet Girl*, suggests that Mr. Coppard would do well to use a larger canvas occasionally, even at the expense of those little fantasies that he sketches so lightly and easily.

Reading Miss Sackville-West is like spending a day and a night on top of the Downs. She begins her new book by painting, in those broad and leisurely strokes which one misses so much in our recent fiction, the countryside about the Western Downs some fifty years ago, on a day when all the young men and girls are away at the Scouring of the White Horse, and only the old men are left in the village, drinking their ale and cider outside the Waggon of Hay. The early part of the book is marvelously well written—not a few purple patches deftly stitched together, but a finely sustained flight, with sun and wind and rain in every page of it. Briefly, the story she tells is the love story of Clare, daughter of the Manor House, and “Gipsy” Lovel, the strange young man who did odd jobs but refused any settled pursuit. These two are brought together by their love of the open, the bare and windy tops of the Downs, where they go riding together. Needless to say, their love affair does not prosper, and both of them marry persons of their own class, for whom they have nothing but contempt. I was sorry that Miss Sackville-West had to leave her fine opening manner, with its broad treatment of the countryside and its people, to come to closer grips with her characters and plunge us into the kind of intrigue that seems inevitable in any story of rural life, that Hardy-esque business of everybody scheming to marry off everyone else to the wrong persons. Not that she does it badly, or that her characterisation is faulty ; both are adequate ; but we seem to have met both the figures and the situation before and grown a little tired of them. But, as Aristotle would probably inform us, if we had not had the middle we could not have had the end, and the end, where the two lovers, in a high amorous dream, go out into the snow on the heights of the Downs, is a finely tragic piece of writing. There is good workmanship throughout the book, but there is also something better—passion, poetry, a sense of place so strong that it imposes its vision upon the reader and binds him captive.

Our *Mr. Wrenn* is not *Babbitt*, nor is it quite juvenilia ; it is an early, promising, and indeed very entertaining work. It has been compared with Mr. Wells's *Kipps* and *Mr. Polly*, but it has probably a stronger likeness to that writer's early and now forgotten *Wheels of Chance*. But Mr. Lewis has one advantage over Mr. Wells, for while he likes to give us one closely conceived character against the background of a whole society, he does not suffer the vulgar intrusion into the story of any sociological and statistical gods, as Mr. Wells has so often done. Here Mr. Lewis introduces to us Mr. Wrenn, aged thirty-five, a clerk and a meek little bachelor, who has, however, imagination and a sense of the romantic. The early parts of the story, when we watch Mr. Wrenn going to and fro from his office, hungering for travel and adventure, are excellent, and Mr. Wrenn's actual adventures in the flesh, on his arrival in England, are not less good, particularly the episode of his encounter with the red-haired, ineffectual art student Istra, a type Mr. Lewis has caught very cleverly. But the later part of the book, in which our hero returns to New York and his office, and finally falls in love, is amusing but on a lower level, for Mr. Lewis is merely doing for New York what Mr. Pett Ridge used to do for London, and it is something more than that which is making his name the one we are always hoping to see on the back of every new American novel.

J. B. PRIESTLEY

LITERARY HISTORY AND CRITICISM

THE RHYTHM OF SPEECH. By WILLIAM THOMSON. Maclehose, Jackson. 10s.

THE PRINCIPLES OF ENGLISH METRE. By EGERTON SMITH. Oxford University Press. 12s. 6d.

A HISTORY OF GERMAN VERSIFICATION. By H. G. ATKINS. Methuen. 10s. 6d.

SHAKESPEARE'S USE OF SONG. By RICHMOND NOBLE. Oxford University Press. 12s. 6d.

THE YEAR'S WORKS IN ENGLISH STUDIES, 1920-1. Edited by SIR SIDNEY LEE and F. S. BOAS. Oxford University Press. 7s. 6d.

THE ART OF THOMAS HARDY. By LIONEL JOHNSON. Lane. 8s. 6d.

STUDIES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FOOL IN THE ELIZABETHAN DRAMA. By OLIVE MARY BUSBY. Oxford University Press. 3s. 6d.

IN these days when *odium theologicum* has grown to be little more than a phrase, when people no longer hate one another because they have different views on the nature of God, when indeed such persons tend to fraternise and to found clubs for the purpose of mutual improvement—in these days persons inclined by temperament to controversy of the bitterer sort have betaken themselves to the discussion of English prosody. No theological mystery could be deeper or more inspissated than this ; and it calls forth yearly its quota of devoted martyrs. Of these I am not one : I confess myself unfit to review Dr. Thomson's weighty and elaborate book. Dr. Thomson shows a devotion to the proper view of prosody which I am unable to emulate ; and this devotion has awakened in him elements of the cunning which, we know, is the ultimate weapon of true piety. His book was to be published ; but, without the assistance of the Carnegie Trust, this could not have been. But one is not eligible for the benefits of the Carnegie Trust unless one is the holder of a Scottish University Degree. Dr. Thomson "accordingly presented to Glasgow University, as a thesis for that Degree, the first ten chapters of the twelve comprised in the present volume." The manœuvre results in a volume the larger aims of which are :

(1) To lift the whole subject out of the region of bookish learning with its appeals to the eye, and set it on a basis of scientific observation by means of the ear, verifying results by the application of tests open to all.

(2) To encourage in schools and universities a rational analysis of verse-form resulting in a rhythmical synthesis : the double process being calculated to supersede artificial systems of scansion which lead to nothing.

(3) To devise a notation fitted to serve as a universal medium of communication, and thus do for the rhythm of speech what the symbols of the music-page do for the less complex rhythms of music.

The utmost the present writer feels himself competent to say is that every problem of metre and rhythm is examined by Dr. Thomson in the light of common sense, if not with obvious profit to the understanding or the writing of good poetry. Prosodists are often fantastic ; and this they need not be, for the daily bread of their calling will confront them with morsels strange enough. Dr. Thomson is not fantastic, he is common-sensical—even when he is confronted with the difficulty of accent and

quantity. This is a subject on which, apparently and fortunately, there are no definite conclusions to be arrived at ; but Dr. Thomson's careful analyses will wake ideas in the minds of all interested persons who read him.

Professor Egerton Smith, who is Principal and Professor of English at Krishnagar College, goes very far in a very gallant attempt. His much smaller book (it includes only some 300 much smaller pages) includes even rules for the composition of the *sestina* and, on the *sestina*, the *rondeau*, the *ballade*, the *triolet* and the rest of them, the dictum that " delicate grace of expression and dainty workmanship are absolutely necessary for the writing of these forms." Professor Smith adds :

Of the various forms Mr. Gosse says that the *rondel*, *rondeau*, and *triolet* " are habitually used for joyous or gay thought, and lie most within the province of *jeu d'esprit* and epigram," while the *villanelle*, *ballade*, and *chant-royal* " are usually wedded to serious or stately expression and almost demand a vein of pathos " : but this distinction need not be pressed.

No : these distinctions ought never to be pressed, for poetic forms are what the poet makes them, and prosodical theories depend entirely on the pleasure of the poets in their practice. Dr. Thomson and Professor Egerton Smith are precisely like geologists who should theorise on the process of the Creation, with the Creator at their elbows, ready at any moment to explain what He meant in the same language themselves have used. Much the same remarks apply to Professor Atkins's *History of German Versification*. This attempt is interesting because, of all the great bodies of modern poetry, German poetry is mechanically closest to our own, its framework being the same, though owing to its cramped and shorter history, it is less supple and less subtle. Professor Atkins gives a good account of his subject. It is a pity, however, that his examination has not extended into more modern times. The reader might be excused for thinking that he had never heard of that great master of verse-forms, Detlev von Liliencron. And *vers libre*, sooner and oftener used in Germany than elsewhere, might have had from him a more exhaustive treatment. But his study makes an interesting sidelight on our own problems.

It is something of a relief to turn from these mechanics to Mr. Richard Noble's more general argument in *Shakespeare's Use of Song*. The argument, that Shakespeare's use of song is essentially and originally dramatic, is not new : it has been put forward, shortly, but very convincingly, if my memory serves me, by Mr. Edmund Gosse. But it deserves to be argued again at greater length ; and Mr. Noble argues it with care and with cogency. An example of his line of thought is to be found in the almost casual statement in a footnote that " ten at least of the songs in the plays serve to compensate for lack of scenery." Like all scholars with new ideas of their own Mr. Noble tends now and again to talk a trifle wildly, as is instanced in this complaint :

When we consider the great appeal which Shakespeare's songs have made, and take account of the eloquence expended in his praise, it seems almost incredible that no one has ventured to treat musically the songs as a whole, yet Captain Jaggard, the author of the invaluable " Shakespeare Bibliography," tells us such is the case—individual songs and groups of songs have been set by individual composers from time to time, but no musician has endeavoured to deal with all the songs in a systematic manner. This failure is to be taken as a reflection on the English-speaking people and not on musicians, who have not the leisure to engage in an undertaking for which there is no remunerative demand and by reason of which they would be involved in very specialised study to enable them to provide an adequate and appropriate interpretation.

Surely this runs counter to the whole of Mr. Noble's argument? Surely each song should be taken by itself, as the play in which it occurs is to be produced? An inclusive treatment of all the songs by any composer would indisputably be planned for the concert platform, not for the theatre. But this is a minor aberration in a study which, in its general lines, as in most of its details, is an excellent piece of work.

The function of the volume called *The Year's Work in English Studies* is mainly digressive; but it is far more readable than this word might be taken to imply. Within the space of twelve chapters it gives an account of what has been done in the direction of the study of English Literature during the year which it covers. Thus there are chapters on General Works, on Anglo-Saxon Studies, on Shakespeare (by Sir Sidney Lee), on Elizabethan drama, on Elizabethan poetry and prose, on the Restoration, on the Eighteenth Century, and (two chapters) on the Nineteenth Century. The year covered is one that has gone by. Professor Herford, reporting on, and summarising, Mr. Elton's account of the Nineteenth Century, says:

The poetry of the period clearly, as has been said, does not overshadow the prose, as it did in the previous generation, but it asks at least as much acute discernment from the critic of style. Browning, like Meredith, has many notes that vibrate for the twentieth century: but the Victorian idol, Tennyson, has suffered some damage, and a former lecture by Mr. Elton himself bore evidence of that "reaction." His discussion in the present book modifies that attitude, while leaving it, naturally, far on this side of idolatry.

That is the old note; but, since Mr. Elton wrote on the subject, we have all revised our views upon Tennyson. To such fluctuations is the study of English literature liable! But, where Tennyson is apologised for, Mr. Bernard Shaw and Samuel Butler are taken seriously on the same page by Mr. H. V. Routh, who explains precisely what Mr. Shaw did mean by writing *Back to Methuselah*—a point which has troubled many admirers. Mr. Routh also praises, with good reason, Mr. Osbert Burdett's admirable book on *The Idea of Coventry Patmore*.

Mr. Routh opens his essay on the second half of the nineteenth century with a reference to Mr. Thomas Hardy; and the time has now been chosen to re-issue Lionel Johnson's thirty-year old essay on that author. The form of the re-issue is perhaps a little open to question. Mr. John Lane, who owns himself responsible for it, felt that "a book with such a title demanded a section dealing with Mr. Hardy's great and still growing reputation as a poet." And eventually he was, he says, "fortunate enough to enlist the services of Mr. J. E. Barton, the Headmaster of Bristol Grammar School," whom he has "known for some years as an enthusiastic admirer and withal a discriminating critic of Mr. Hardy's poems." Now Lionel Johnson's study, written before he or anyone else suspected that Mr. Hardy could be a poet, is a little classic of contemporary criticism. Mr. Barton's essay on Mr. Hardy's poetry would be a very respectable and useful effort to be read to a school essay society. But the union of the two between the same covers is a trifle disconcerting; and one asks oneself why Mr. Lane should have thought it necessary. Lionel Johnson's study is not a mere handbook. It is a work which has an independent life of its own; and to attempt to bring it up to date, without finding a critic capable of saying what Johnson would have said of the works published by Mr. Hardy since his time, seems to me to be rash.

EDWARD SHANKS

BELLES-LETTRES

MODERN ENGLISH ESSAYS (1870-1920). 5 Vols. Ed., ERNEST RHYS. Dent.
3s. per vol.

THIS collection of modern essays, which was badly needed and therefore promised much, is rather disappointing. Its five 'pleasant little volumes are, of course, very readable ; all the more important miscellaneous writers of the last fifty years are represented ; and the majority of the selected essays are copyright, not a few being not easily accessible elsewhere. To a reader who merely wishes to indulge in some preliminary tasting of modern prose-writers, these five volumes are well worth the fifteen shillings asked for them. But to any lover of essays and essayists, they are, I repeat, disappointing. Mr. Rhys is a capable editor of long experience, but for once he has been overwhelmed by his task, has lost his bearings in an ocean of print, and, clearly beginning with no very definite idea of what he was out to do, has ended badly, reaching port with a very mixed cargo indeed. He has collected without knowing exactly what he wanted to collect. In his Introduction the editor remarks :

The present collection is meant, then, to be suggestive, and not in any way exhaustive. It picks out its instances now for reasons of style and vivid treatment, now for variety of subject, now for the unmistakable Montaigne touch with an individual readjustment. Originally intended as a gallery of literary essays, it expanded as time went on to a set of essays on Life, Letters, Men, Places, Books and Characters.

This suggests that he intended, in the first place, to give us a representative collection of critical articles, on the lines of that excellent little volume in *The World's Classics*. Such a selection would have been very valuable, but it would have had to give us the best—or the most characteristic—work of our best modern critics, which this present collection does not do. Indeed, owing to the confused purpose of the editor, it is faulty from every point of view. Whether regarded as a collection of essays (in the sense discussed below) or of critical articles, or as an anthology of prose, it is equally clear that some things should have been left out and other things should have been brought in. There are, for example, in these volumes several reprinted reviews, things that can be found in every literary weekly, and I cannot but think that it would be difficult to justify the inclusion of such things under any general scheme. Then, on the other hand, the things we really look for, essays, real essays, are hardly present at all. Between Mr. William Archer (with a review of " Dr. Brandes on Shakespeare ") and Sir Oliver Lodge (on Huxley), between Lord Bryce (on " Lincoln as an Orator ") and Mr. Edmond Holmes (on the Spitalfields Weavers), between Professor This and Professor That, the poor essayists, snapping up their unconsidered trifles, are almost squeezed out of existence.

I have no intention of enlarging upon the term " essay " by going the usual round, by way of Montaigne, Bacon, and Johnson's ubiquitous definition : I am content to point out that a term which applies equally well to Locke's work on the Human Understanding and Lamb's " Old China," to John Stuart Mill's " Liberty " and Max Beerbohm's " On Speaking French," is useless. It is high time we all agreed that an essay is the work of an essayist. Most of us agree to call a certain type of prose writer an essayist ; we call Lamb, Hazlitt, Leigh Hunt, Stevenson, Belloc, Chesterton, Beerbohm, and the rest, essayists, but not, for example, Lord Bryce and Sir Oliver Lodge ; and we should restrict the use of the term " essay " to the prose compositions of such writers. All the others, from the professor who writes

on "The Dynamic Urge of the Ideal" to the man who tells the readers of the *Mudford Chronicle* how pins are made, should find some other name for their compositions, such as "thesis" or "article." One mark of our attitude towards the essayist pure and simple that has often been noticed is our indifference as to what his subject may be. If, for example, Sir Oliver Lodge or Lord Bryce were to write on Stamp-collecting or Tubular Boilers, they would give us an adequate, learned, account of the matter, but I should not read their effusions because I am not interested in these particular subjects. But, on the other hand, if Messrs. Beerbohm, Belloc, Chesterton, Lynd, and the other notable essayists of our time were to write on such things, I should certainly read them, because I know that what I should really get would be a glimpse of the personality of each writer and not a strict account of Stamp-collecting or Tubular Boilers. The essayist's subjects are simply avenues of approach: we approach Mr. Belloc by way of Bridges or Little Boats, Mr. Chesterton by way of Penny Dreadfuls, Mr. Beerbohm by way of Fires or Servants, Mr. Lynd by way of the Derby, and so on. The essay approximates to talk: it belongs, to follow Sir William Watson, to the loquitive order of literature. As a literary form, it has never been properly studied, though there has been a good deal of talk round it. It aims at the effect of brilliant but familiar talk, and as it is compelled to make the printed word do the work of the spoken word, the inflections of the voice, the gestures, the very physical presence of the talker himself, its success depends largely on manner and style, in which there must be a certain *personal saturation*, a characteristic, common to all genuine, original essayists, that would be well worth a critical examination and analysis. Like the morris dance, it is a form of art that we have brought into this country from abroad and made our own. Mr. A. C. Benson, in an article on the essay included in this collection, presents us with a view of a man trying to argue the nose off his face by trying to prove to us that the English temperament is not favourable to the essay. That his view of the Anglo-Saxon (whoever he is) and his view of the essay do not fit together should have made him change those views to square with the undoubted fact that the essay has been very successful in this country and, indeed, flourishes in this climate.

Putting aside, then, the critical articles, reviews, and whatnot, that occupy so large a space in these five volumes, and turning to the essays themselves, I still find the selection very unhappy. It is, of course, possible that questions of copyright have restricted the editor's power of choice: I hope so, because as it is, he seems to have chosen so badly. Thus, Stevenson is represented only by the hackneyed "Walking Tours," which should have been passed over for "The Lantern Bearers" or "Beggars." "A Cloud of Pinafores," Max Beerbohm's solitary contribution, is certainly not one of his best things. Belloc's "On An Unknown Country" and E. V. Lucas' "A Philosopher That Failed" are both good selections, but these writers have other manners. Augustine Birrell here appears as a critic rather than an essayist. Robert Lynd, essentially an essayist, is simply represented by a critical article on Hawthorne. G. S. Street, a genuine essayist with a manner and style of his own, is not represented at all. But enough! Let us go back to our dreams of the perfect anthology of modern essays: I have mine and I suppose you have yours. Perhaps one day either yours or mine will suddenly change from a day-dream into a concrete thing, two or three tangible volumes, and then a great many people will be surprised when they read this anthology of ours, for it will teach them that the lyric and the novel have a very powerful rival, hitherto underestimated, in the literary form of the essay, in which it may be found, when the mists have been dispelled, that our own time has had some of its greatest triumphs.

JOHN BOYNTON

THE CLASSICS

- THE MAKING OF LATIN: AN INTRODUCTION TO GREEK, LATIN, AND ENGLISH ETYMOLOGY. By R. S. CONWAY. Murray. 5s.
- EARLY LATIN VERSE. By W. M. LINDSAY. Oxford University Press. 28s.
- FLOSCULI LATINI. Edited by A. B. POYNTON. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 5s. 6d.
- TRANSLATION AND TRANSLATIONS: THEORY AND PRACTICE. By J. P. POSTGATE. 6s.
- Κτῆμα ἐς ἀεί. Selected by A. L. IRVINE. Godalming: A. C. Curtis. London: H. Milford. 3s. 6d.
- THIRTY-TWO PASSAGES FROM THE ILIAD: IN ENGLISH RHYMED VERSE. By C. D. LOCOCK. Allen & Unwin. 4s. 6d.
- THE ECLOGUES OF VIRGIL: A REVISED TRANSLATION, WITH TEXT AND NOTES. By THOMAS F. ROYDS. Oxford: Blackwell. 6s.
- A CHILD'S GARDEN OF VERSES. By R. L. STEVENSON. Done into Latin by T. R. GLOVER. Cambridge: Heffer. 7s. 6d.
- CHANTIES IN GREEK AND LATIN. By W. H. D. ROUSE. Oxford: Blackwell. 2s. 6d.
- HERODAS: THE MIMES AND FRAGMENTS. With Notes by WALTER HEADLAM. Edited by A. D. KNOX. Cambridge University Press. 63s.
- IULIANI EPISTULÆ ET LEGES. Ed., I. BIDEZ et F. CUMONT. Paris: "Les Belles Lettres." London: H. Milford. 11s.
- THEORY OF ADVANCED PROSE COMPOSITION. By J. DONOVAN. Oxford: Blackwell. 7s.
- THE ORESTEIA OF ÆSCHYLUS. Translated by R. C. TREVELYAN. University Press of Liverpool. London: Hodder & Stoughton. 5s.
- THE ŒDIPUS TYRANNUS OF SOPHOCLES. Translated by J. T. SHEPPARD. Acting Edition. Cambridge University Press. 2s.
- THE PROBLEM OF THE AGAMEMNON—THE RECOGNITION SCENE IN THE CHOEPHORE. by E. S. HOERNLE. Oxford: Blackwell. Each 2s.
- THEOCRITUS, BION AND MOSCHUS. Translated by ANDREW LANG. Illustrated by W. RUSSELL FLINT. 2 Vols. The Medici Society. £8 18s. 6d.
- ECHOES FROM THEOCRITUS AND OTHER POEMS. By EDWARD CRACROFT LEFROY. With Decorations by JOHN AUSTEN and an Introduction by J. A. SYMONDS. Selwyn & Blount. 5s.

PROFESSOR CONWAY'S little book on *The Making of Latin* should be a godsend to students and teachers, for it is one of a rare sort to-day. The little attention paid in this country to philology in comparison with history and archæology is astonishing. Here the professor supplies a neat introduction to the subject which is full of points. The origin of various forms and usages in language is fascinating, and Brugmann, the main authority, may yet be modified in several ways by new discoveries. The laws of vowel-change are a comparatively recent acquisition.

Professor Lindsay's *Early Latin Verse* is a masterly discussion in great detail of the scansion of Plautus and Terence, and their intonation of the sentence. "To disclose it the rubbish of half a century [mostly from Germany] had to be cleared away." The Romans were nothing like so careless and ignorant about quantities as we are to-day, but their practice shows some anomalies, naturally enough in comedy, which tends to conversational utterance. These Professor Lindsay follows out with effective protests against the short-cuts of dogmatism.

The *Flosculi Latini* are passages designed to help composers and students in general. It is interesting to note that the Editor was introduced to Petronius by the Bishop of Oxford. No one, I imagine, would be asked to write like him or Apuleius, though both are delightful to read. Mr. Poynton is excellently catholic, including Erasmus and Bentley. The latter on emendation mentions Aristarchus, but also coincides with Jane Austen in seeing a great deal of talent in a good guess. A survey like this illustrates the human interest of the classics. Dr. Dryasdust is no longer, I hope, allowed to obscure that. The fashionable lisp of Alcibiades, Cicero's eight villas, Seneca's asthma and sense of funk in a tunnel—in such details the ancient world becomes real.

Dr. Postgate's book on *Translation* suggests so many snares in the path of the renderer of the classics that he may well despair of doing anything successfully. He will find, however, in the preliminary essay support from the eminent for many liberties; and, when he once sees that exact versions are impossible, he can proceed to compensate the reader for what is missed by judicious additions or other freedoms. I cannot agree with Dr. Postgate that English is as concise as Latin, though it may be so in carefully selected passages. Milton can be classically brief, but has had little or no influence on English style in this way. On the question of rhymes, Dr. Postgate is very sound, and his hints and examples should help strugglers who lament their paucity in the English language. A sense of humour which shuns gravity-removing phrases is highly desirable. The meanings implicit in various, otherwise effective, words are a danger to the translator. Dr. Postgate's "Star-gazing, Stella?" as the beginning of Plato's famous epigram may suggest to a modern reader absent-mindedness, the kind of astronomy which the bright young man in Hardy's *Two on a Tower* fell into as the result of feminine influence. To me the renderings from Lucan are the most attractive of Dr. Postgate's translations.

Forty-four pieces of Greek and Latin with select English opposite them form the *Κτήμα ἐς ἀεὶ* used at Charterhouse school, and deserve that title. Mr. Irvine, the selector, has chosen his translators in a catholic spirit, including the grace of Calverley and Headlam, the dramatic fervour of Professor Murray, and the stately austerity of Whitelaw. Some quite modern renderings are used, but Lord Derby is still chosen for the Iliad. His idea of the parting of Hector and Andromache may be compared with Mr. Locock's. Mr. Locock makes a good impression with his rhymed metre, but he does not keep so close to the text as Derby.

Mr. Royds in republishing his revised translation of the *Eclogues* of Virgil invites the reader "not to a *post-mortem*, but to a banquet." He hopes to make the Virgil lesson less painful, and to help those who return to their classics over a pipe. His notes are admirable in their wide scope, and full of life, like his rendering. Some may acquire a new respect for Virgil, when they learn that he left about £90,000.

Makers of Latin Verse to-day find a crowd of serious reformers who "call their harmless art a crime." But the game still goes on, and many may enjoy the ingenuities of Mr. Glover and Dr. Rouse.

The edition of the *Mimes* of Herodas begun by Headlam and finished by Mr. Knox is a storehouse of erudition concerning difficult Greek of which the ordinary scholar knows little. These shrewd, sometimes outrageous, and generally unpoetical sketches of human nature show the freedom of a half-orientalised life, in which husbands are a necessary evil, and wives bully slaves to their hearts' content. Herodas combines clever realism with the pedantry of the learned writer. Mr. Knox appreciates both aspects of him, and translates him with an eye on the idiom of English comedy. In a new edition he should say more about the MS., and the work of scholars since Rutherford's tentative text.

The literary remains of Julian are printed by two French scholars in this convenient edition with careful attention to the MSS., which Hertlein did not achieve in the Teubner text. Julian, though pedantic in his references to the Gods and Graces, was a man of considerable kindliness and charm. Here, for instance, is a delightful letter in which he presents to an orator and friend a Bithynian property of his with a good sea-view, though not subject to the worries of garrulous merchants and sailors. It is the very place for a bookman, including a small reminiscence of its imperial owner's husbandry in the shape of vines which yield positive nectar. The epigram at the end of this letter should have been corrected in a note.

"Let us throw away all the rest of the papers, and go by the Greek Prose," once exclaimed an Oxford examiner. Certainly such prose is a real test of a student's taste and knowledge, and Mr. Donovan's collection of hints and examples should go far to enable the examinee to play the twisters he is up against with a straight bat.

Mr. Trevelyan's *Oresteia* and Mr. Sheppard's *Ædipus* are contrasts. The former is plain and bold in sticking to the manner of Æschylus, while the latter frankly modernises, not so much in language as in the breaking up of sentences with dots and dashes. Sophocles is smooth, and does not, like Shakespeare, indulge in anacolutha, even in passages of strong emotion. For acting in English Mr. Sheppard's way may be the better, but Mr. Trevelyan's version reads much better, and can be understood easily by an attentive audience. Why is he contemptuous about the judgment of scholars? They have done a lot for Æschylus, and recognise the wisdom of the Elder in the *Agamemnon*, that "conjecture and certain knowledge are different things." Mr. Hoernle's Æschylean conjectures are ingenious and worth considering. They can neither be proved or disproved on the evidence we have.

"Not we the pioneers of beauty," wrote Theocritus. The Medici Press, if not pioneers, are protagonists to-day in the cause of fine printing. They have made a beautiful thing of Lang's beautiful versions of *Theocritus*, *Bion* and *Moschus*. Mr. Russell Flint's illustrations are charming, too, in colour and invention, though now and again the figures seem rather awkwardly posed.

It is pleasant to see Lefroy's *Echoes from Theocritus* republished in a comely form. His sonnets are among the happiest evocations of the Greek spirit in modern verse, and deserve the often abused title of cameos. He was curiously Greek in his sensuous enjoyment of young life, and always suffering from physical weakness had nothing unhealthy in his outlook on life.

VERNON RENDALL